New MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

Monthly Literary Section
WITH THIS ISSUE

Can England Get Rid of Chamberlain?
How Strong Is Labor?
R. PALME DUTT

Communism and Democracy
The Communist Convention
A. B. MAGIL

'Nobody's Passing, Baby'
A Cable from Spain
JOSEPH NORTH

Defense for the Counsel
CHARLES RECHT

History and Fiction
SAMUEL SILLEN

Cartoons and Drawings by Redfield, Heliker, Groth, Reinhardt, Snow, and Siporin

ON THE COVER
Neville Chamberlain
TURN TO PAGE 3

JUNE 14, 1938
TWO SECTIONS; THIS IS SECTION ONE

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Between Ourselves

NEXT week we will publish an article on the problems of Czechoslovakia's plans for self-defense, in the event of the extension of Nazi aggression to that country, by Col. Stanislav Yester of the Czechoslovakian General Staff. The article was secured for us by our foreign editor, Theodore Draper, who is now in Prague. "Its author," writes Mr. Draper, "is one of the greatest military authorities in Europe." He is ". . . a professor at the Military Academy in Prague, the Czech West Point," and "the author of many works on the problems of national defense and on the wars in Spain, China, and Ethiopia."

With this issue Richard Wright, author of the Federal Writers Project prize-winning novel, *Uncle Tom's Children,* joins the editorial board of our literary section. Mr. Wright re- es Horace Gregory, who has been pelled to withdraw by pressure ther work.

gain we must come back to our campaign for $20,000. NEW MASSES is desperately in need of the $2,801.63 which will complete the drive. The summer months which we are just entering are the greatest strain on any magazine. Without a subsidy, without reserves, the financial burden becomes a daily problem of NEW MASSES. We must have the help of our readers to continue. We set our goal at $20,000—help us reach it without delay.

Airmail or wire your contribution *now* to NEW MASSES, 31 East 27th St., New York City.

What's What

NUMEROUS comments on our new format indicate that it is being well received. Most readers favor the practice of having a caricature on the cover, and the increased flexibility has drawn special attention. We are interested in receiving more opinions.

"The new format," writes Mary Pender of Darien, Conn., "makes NEW MASSES the most distinguished magazine in its field. The last issue seemed to me to have more volume, within the same thirty-two pages, than any in recent months, and I suspect that this is made possible by the new layout."

A. Walter Marsden, of Wigan, Lancaster, England, writes an enthusiastic letter, singling out for special praise the book-review section and our last literary section. He writes, after receiving the May 10 issue:

"Briefly, it is the best number of any magazine I've ever read. . . . I can sum up my feelings in another way—I wish we had a NEW MASSES in England."

Albert Prago, a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, writes us from somewhere in Spain that an anonymous donor has subscribed to NEW MASSES in his name and that he is receiving it regularly. He writes of a friend, Dave Reiss, who was killed in action. "Dave went through the whole Brunete campaign and was frequently advanced in rank. In September I learned that he had been made commander of the machine-gun company; and from time to time reports would come to me in Albacete, where I was working in the press service of the International Brigades, that Reiss was going like a house afire, and that he hadn't been wounded yet."

In February, Prago writes, he rejoined Reiss, who had just left the hospital after a slight wound and was returning to his post as Adjutant of the Lincoln-Washington Battalions. "On March 2, I was put on as interpreter, Lenny Lamb was given leave, and Reiss became Battalion Commandant. On March 10 we were in the front lines, withstanding the fascist offensive. Dave was a bit worried, for we were holding down a rather poor position, and when the attack came in earnest, after a whole morning of strafing, bombing, and artillery fire, the battalion found itself in desperate straits."

"Reiss began to give orders for a retreat, and I was translating the orders when, quite suddenly, we heard a short whistle—so short tha we had no time to duck. We knew it was meant for us, yet we had nc chance to move. I was nearest to the *refugio* but I could do no more thar turn on my heels, when I was stunnec by the explosion, and felt my knee. buckle under as a piece of shrapnel tore into my thigh. . . . Dave had received wounds all through the trunk of his body; he lost consciousness after a few minutes and died while he was being carried back in a makeshift stretcher."

THIS WEEK

VOL. XXVII, No. 12

June 14, 1938

Can England Get Rid of Chamberlain? *by R. Palme Dutt* . 3
Q. E. D. 7
"Nobody's Passing, Baby" *by Joseph North* 7
In the Sudeten Regions *by Theodore Draper* 8
Editorial Comment 9
Ben's Little Boy, Louie *by Robert Forsythe* 13
Communism and Democracy *by A. B. Magil* 14
Liberty League Medicos 17
Big as the World *by Jake Martin* 18
The People of Orchard Street *by Norman Macleod* . . . 19
Defense for the Counsel *by Charles Recht* 19
Return to Silence 20
Readers' Forum 20

REVIEW AND COMMENT

History and Fiction *by Samuel Sillen* 22
The Career of Léon Blum *by Samuel Bernstein* 23
Crisis in the Far East *by Anna Louise Strong* 24
Dialectical Study of Biology *by Roy Powell* 26
Aristocrat in Africa *by Joseph Frank* 28
Movies *by James Dugan* 30

LITERARY SECTION

Walt Whitman's Democracy *by Philip Stevenson* 129
Spanish Diary *by James Neugass* 133
The Pseudo-Suicide *by A. T. Rosen* 135
Cowards of Us All *by Ernest Brace* 136
"Orthodoxy" *by Thomas Orean* 139
With Apologies *by J. M. Wilkoff* 140
Four Poems *by Sidney Alexander* 142

Art work by A. Birnbaum (cover), John Groth, John Mackey, A. Redfield, A. Ajay, Anton Refregier, Mitchell Siporin, John Heliker, Snow, Charles Martin, Stanley DeGraff.

Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Who's Who

R. PALME DUTT is editor of the British *Labour Monthly*. . . . Joseph North is *Daily* and *Sunday Worker* correspondent in Spain. . . . Charles Recht is a well-known New York lawyer. . . . Anna Louise Strong is the author of *I Change Worlds, China's Millions,* and numerous other books. . . . Roy Powell is professor of biology in an Eastern university. . . . Samuel Bernstein, author of *Beginnings of Marxian Socialism in France,* recently published two articles on "Babeuf and Babeuvism" in *Science and Society.*

The lithograph by Mitchell Siporin, on page 9, was exhibited earlier this year at Chicago with other works by members of the Chicago artists group. . . . Anton Refregier's painting, reproduced on page 7, was exhibited at the American Artists Congress show in New York City last month.

Philip Stevenson has contributed to NEW MASSES before. He dramatized Albert Maltz's *Season of Celebration,* which was recently produced in New York as *Transit*. . . . James Neugass returned recently from six months in Spain. He served on the Teruel front. . . . Ernest Brace is the author of a novel, *Commencement,* and many short stories, some of which have been reprinted in the annual O'Brien anthology and in the O. Henry Memorial collection. . . . Sidney Alexander has written for NEW MASSES before.

Flashbacks

THE granting of the Magna Charta, which showed unforgettably that the power of an absolute ruler could be limited by his subjects, took place June 15, 1215. . . . Wat Tyler, at the head of a mass delegation of peasants, conferred with King Richard, June 14, 1381, successfully demanding the abolition of serfdom and the removal of all restrictions of freedom on labor. The following day he was publicly murdered by the Lord Mayor of London. . . . Calling to mind the tradition of the Magna Charta, the proletarian Chartist movement presented its first petition to Parliament, June 14, 1839, seeking greater participation of the people in the government via universal male suffrage and other electoral reforms. . . . Giacomo Matteotti, Secretary of the Italian Socialist Party was kidnaped in the streets of Rome and cruelly murdered, June 10, 1924. As one of his fascist attackers later confessed, Matteotti insisted, "You may kill me; you will not kill the ideal. My children will be proud of their father. The workers will bless my dead body."

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CAN ENGLAND GET RID OF CHAMBERLAIN?

What Are the Prospects for the People's Front?

R. PALME DUTT

WILL some form of broad popular-front combination or democratic peace front be realized in Britain in time to check the pro-fascist policy of Chamberlain before it has completed its task of wrecking the League and releasing general war in Europe?

This is coming more and more to the forefront as the central question of British politics. In view of Britain's role in world politics, it is obvious that the answer will have a decisive influence on the world political situation, for the further advance of fascist aggression or for the success of a world peace front.

Until the spring of this year the problem of a people's front in Britain was still a more or less speculative question of the future, and not a direct issue of practical politics, despite the widely recognized urgency of the need to combine forces to defeat the reactionary "National" government. It was obvious that the conditions were not yet ripe. In the first place, working-class unity had not yet been achieved; the Labor Party still rejected the affiliation of the Communist Party, and equally rejected co-operation with any other groups. In the second place, there were not yet any signs of disintegration of the government "National" majority or of regrouping within the capitalist parties.

These conditions have not yet changed. But there are signs that, with the gathering internal crisis of British politics, they are beginning to change, and new combinations may develop in the near future. It is too early to say in what direction the regrouping will finally take place. But the proposal, if not of a full-fledged people's front, at any rate of some type of democratic electoral-parliamentary combination or united peace alliance, ranging from the Liberals to the Communists, centering round the Labor Party and possibly associating some dissident conservatives and independent elements, has been brought to the forefront by a series of recent events, and is now being widely discussed as an issue of practical politics.

The gathering internal crisis of British politics is the reflection of the general crisis of British policy in the present world situation.

The "National" government, since its formation seven years ago, has consistently favored and assisted the advance of reaction and fascism in the world, and has pursued a generally anti-Soviet line. Since the victories of the People's Front in France and Spain, the apprehension and hostility toward these events, and open favor to fascism, have been especially marked. At the same time, in the most recent period, the marked advance in the armed strength and aggressiveness of the fascist powers, their direct threats to British interests and possessions and unconcealed ultimate aims of

John Groth

The Star Act from Neville Chamberlain's "Greatest Show on Earth."

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expansion at the expense of the British empire, have no less aroused the apprehension of the British ruling class. Hence the notorious division in the ruling class between two lines of policy: the dominant policy, to seek to reach an understanding with the fascist powers, in order to divert their expansion elsewhere, away from the British empire, against the democratic countries in Europe, against the Chinese popular movement, and ultimately against the Soviet Union; and the minority policy, which finds this encouragement of fascist aggression too dangerous, and finds the path of safety in support of the League of Nations and a collective peace front, even at the expense of alignment with the democratic countries and even the Soviet Union. Thus the strong popular opposition of the labor, democratic, and peace forces against the reactionary policy of the "National" government has been accompanied by a division in the conservative camp.

So long as Baldwin was Prime Minister, he encouraged a certain maneuvering between the groupings in the conservative camp. But when Neville Chamberlain succeeded him as Prime Minister a year ago, he was closely identified with the most directly pro-fascist elements, the Londonderrys, Astors, etc., and hostile to the traditionally maneuvering policy of the Foreign Office group associated with Vansittart, who combined reaction with deep suspicion of Hitler. Chamberlain had been the first to denounce sanctions, in advance of the cabinet of which he was a member, as "midsummer madness," and never lost an opportunity to pour contempt on the League or express his admiration of Hitler and Mussolini. He set himself the task of realizing his cherished aim of a close agreement with Mussolini and Hitler. Thus the issues were immediately sharpened.

Eden's resignation in February (after several previous threats of resignation, and immediately following a public attack on him by Hitler and Mussolini) was the first public expression of the crisis within the cabinet. Several ministers very nearly followed him. Eden was by no means the white angel of the League of Nations and collective security that he is sometimes pictured; he bore direct responsibility for much of the worst pro-fascist government-policy, especially toward Spain. But he was identified in the public eye with the League; and his resignation in protest at the opening of the Anglo-Italian negotiations was popular. Hence this breach delivered a powerful shock and awakening to public opinion.

Hitler's armed seizure of Austria in March intensified this awakening. Demonstrations were held on a scale unequaled since the year of the general strike, under the general slogan launched by the Communist Party, "Chamberlain Must Go." A critical situation marked the third week of March. Six conservative MPs prepared to vote against the government. An influential meeting of the City (London's Wall Street) turned down Chamberlain. Lloyd George and Churchill scented their opportunity. Herbert Morrison of the Labor Party leadership supported in an internal meeting some type of popular-front combination. Plans were prepared for an alternative government, comprising eleven Conservatives, nine Labor men, and two Liberals. Parallel approaches were made by Chamberlain to trade-union leaders. For a short time Chamberlain himself is reported to have judged his defeat inevitable.

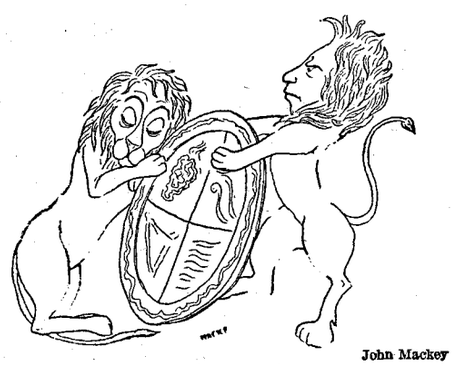
The right-wing Labor leadership saved Chamberlain. When the National Council of Labor met on the critical day, March 22, it debated for four hours and ended without a decision, save to await Chamberlain's speech. The initiative was handed back to Chamberlain. On March 23 Chamberlain summoned Sir Walter Citrine and the Trades Union Congress General Council leaders to Downing Street; they dutifully obeyed his summons and heard his appeal for "good will and cooperation" without opposition. The impression was created that Chamberlain had labor on his side. The conservative opposition collapsed. Lloyd George remained in France, Morrison hurried off to America. When Chamberlain delivered his speech on March 24, there was not a vote in opposition.

Confident that the crisis was over, and triumphant in his success, Chamberlain now poured public scorn on the "feeble opposition," and went full steam ahead with his negotiations with Mussolini and Hitler.

But the crisis was not over. The signs of the new forces gathering had been shown in the March episode, and were to return with increased strength in the succeeding period.

The crisis in British politics is, in reality, still sharpening.

Chamberlain went rapidly forward with his policy of alignment of Britain with the Berlin-Rome axis, toward the further aim of the four-power pact of Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, with the exclusion of the Soviet Union. The Anglo-Italian agreement was signed in April. At the British-French meeting in London pressure was placed on France. France was compelled to open similar negotiations with Italy. A rapid victory of Franco was openly banked on. Plans were prepared for the League of Nations Council to secure the recognition of the Italian conquest of Abyssinia, and to prepare the further weakening of the covenant by the precedent of the special exemption of Switzerland. Pressure was brought to bear on Czechoslovakia to accede to the demands of Henlein and Hitler.



John Mackey

But as the policy develops, and the situation grows more and more acute and menacing, the success of Chamberlain's methods begins to become less and less obvious to British opinion, including a considerable proportion of conservative opinion. The final ratification of the Anglo-Italian agreement begins to become doubtful, especially after Mussolini's openly threatening Genoa speech. Spain's resistance has defeated the calculations of rapid victory for Franco. At the London meeting Daladier made a stronger stand than France has seen for some time in behalf of the rights of French foreign policy, and refused to accede to Chamberlain's demands with regard to the Pyrenees frontier. At the League of Nations Council, British plans had no easy passage, because of the effective leadership for peace of the Soviet Union, cooperating with Spain, China, and New Zealand; only two states voted with Britain and France for non-intervention, while nine abstained; Britain was discredited, indicted, and exposed on every side, and the unhappy Halifax returned, vowing to resign his emergency Foreign Secretaryship. Finally, Mussolini's Genoa speech and Hitler's open threats to Czechoslovakia have increased the difficulties.

At home the position of the Chamberlain government has equally weakened. The docile obedience of Sir Walter C[illegible]ne and the general council was found to [illegible] not so easily repeated when it came [illegible] approaching the decisive trade unions for rearmament, on whose behalf Citrine had no power to negotiate; the engineering trade-unions were not ready to give the old blind wartime cooperation, did not conceal their suspicion of the government and the whole policy behind rearmament, and openly demanded arms for Spain, if arms were to be produced, as alleged, for the defense of democracy. The May Day demonstrations touched records not equaled since the year of the general strike. A surge of the demand for unity to defeat Chamberlain spread through the labor movement and all supporters of peace. On this basis, by the abstention of other candidates and local cooperation in the fight, a whole series of by-elections were won against Chamberlain, and revealed the tide of public feeling running against him. At the same time the wholesale scandals of profiteering and inefficiency of the Chamberlain regime in rearmament, especially in air rearmament, discredited the cabinet.

By the middle of May a new reconstruction of the Chamberlain government was necessary, involving the throwing overboard of two cabinet ministers, and changes in five cabinet offices and four other ministerial offices. But it was universally recognized that this reconstruction was only a beginning. A major reconstruction is due to follow; and there are reports of intentions to draw in Eden, and possibly Churchill, in order to strengthen the weakening "National" government.

The situation is thus exceptionally favorable for a combination of the opposition forces to defeat Chamberlain.

The events of March have shown that la-

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bor's role is decisive for the possibility of such a combination of opposition forces to defeat Chamberlain and save the fight for peace. The Liberal Party is ready for such cooperation, as shown in the decision of its conference at Bath in May; the Communist Party is ready, and has from the outset taken the lead in the fight for this aim; there exists a potential opposition among the Conservatives which could be won; above all, there exists a strong body of unrepresented opinion in the electorate favorable to a collective peace policy, partially shown in the strength of the League of Nations Union and peace organizations. But unless the Labor Party, which represents the decisive force of the organized working class, takes the lead, the conception of a people's front is chimerical.

Will the Labor Party change its policy with regard to working-class unity and a people's front? This is the key question for the possibility of a people's front in Britain. Although the March meeting was a failure, and the opposition of the central leadership continues strong, there are signs of new currents developing in the Labor Party in consequence of the crisis.

In the days of March the conception of a united peace alliance, or combination of Labor, Communists, Liberals, and Independents to defeat Chamberlain on the basis of a program of collective peace, resistance to fascism, and social measures of advance, was put forward in *Reynolds News,* the organ of the cooperative movement, by the editor, Sydney R. Elliott. The Cooperative Party, which works in unity with the Labor Party, but is an independent body, is based on the affiliation of the cooperative societies, and represents a membership of over five million. At the conference of the Cooperative Party at Easter the proposal of the united peace alliance was put forward

A. Redfield

THE SNATCH

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by the national committee. The Labor Party Executive, determined to scotch the new movement, put forward a manifesto commanding all Labor Party members to oppose the policy under pain of severe disciplinary threats (this manifesto was dealt with in my article, "The Blind Men of Transport House," in NEW MASSES of May 3). Nevertheless, the resolution for the united peace alliance was carried by 2,343,000 to 1,947,000 votes.

This decision of the Cooperative Party conference has transformed the situation in the labor movement. There may be attempts, possibly successful under extreme pressure, to weaken it or even withdraw it at the Cooperative Union Congress (which includes the non-political cooperative societies outside the Cooperative Party) in June. But the effect of the decision remains. The Labor Party Executive could no longer claim that the demand for a people's front came only from a small left-wing minority, overwhelmingly defeated at Labor Party conferences. The Cooperative Party membership of five million included most of the two million members of the Labor Party, and its machinery of voting is considerably more democratic, being based on the local societies. From the moment of this decision the issue of the people's front has become a burning issue of the labor movement and of the whole of British politics.

Signs of change have consequently begun to appear even within the Labor Party Executive. Powerful unions, such as the Distributive Workers (the sixth largest union), the South Wales Miners Federation, and the Shop Assistants have gone on record for the united peace alliance. When the Labor Party Executive in May endeavored to issue a new manifesto of denunciation of the people's front, the first draft was defeated, and it was revealed that the Executive was divided. A minority of four (Cripps, Pritt, Laski, Ellen Wilkinson), representing the left wing, and those having the strongest confidence of the mass of the membership, and including half the directly elected representatives of the local labor parties, put in a memorandum in favor of the people's front. The manifesto that was finally issued on May 13 was no longer couched in terms of excommunication and pontifical reference to conference decisions, but was presented in the form of a reasoned argument without threats. It was further universally noted that certain reservations and loopholes had begun to appear. For the first time the Labor Party Executive admitted that a change of policy might become necessary if this was "the sole condition for the preservation of peace and democracy," and that "a new situation might arise if any considerable number of Parliament members were to rebel against the Prime Minister's authority."

The general character of the manifesto, however, remained full opposition to the people's front, full insistence on the division of the forces opposed to Chamberlain, and, therefore, a gift to Chamberlain. The government press received it with jubilation. The manifesto endeavored to cover its reactionary

A. Ajay

"If Hitler, if Mussolini, if Japan —how does that Chamberlain peace plan go again?"

policy with "left" arguments, appeals to the traditional "independence" of the Labor Party, and to the necessity of "Socialism" as the only cure for all evils of the present crisis, "the road to peace lies through Socialism," etc. The joyous applause of the most reactionary pro-fascist press, such as the *Observer,* organ of the Cliveden set, which found the manifesto "one of the best-reasoned political papers that we have had for some time," pricked these pretensions. The spectacle of the Citrines and Daltons presenting themselves as militant purists of working-class independence and the fight for immediate Socialism, refusing to be corrupted by the Communists and left wing into the service of capitalism, was too comic to win wide credence. Transport House found its main support in the remnant of the Independent Labor Party, which survives today as a channel of Trotskyist arguments, and in the Trotskyites from whose ranks it found one to run as Labor candidate in the recent Aylesbury by-election in order to split the vote against Chamberlain and thus present a seat to Chamberlain.

Experience is increasingly convincing serious Labor Party supporters that the policy of Transport House in opposing the people's front does not mean independence, but on the contrary, practical assistance to Chamberlain, impotence of the labor movement, and even cooperation with Chamberlain in day-to-day policy. This was powerfully shown by the role of Sir Walter Citrine at the International Federation of Trade Unions meeting at Oslo, where he not only opposed international trade-union unity, delivered sneering attacks against France and the Soviet Union, opposed any measures of working-class sanctions against fascist aggressors, but even went so far as to support Chamberlain in his unconcealed international financial swashbuckling in Mexico and prevent the passing of a resolution of sympathy to the Mexican workers and government in their stab against the British oil capitalists and Chamberlain's bullying intervention.

What are the prospects for the people's front? It is evident that only a combination of all the opposition forces around the central leadership of a united labor movement, on the basis of a program of collective peace, cooperation with France, the Soviet Union, Spain, Czechoslovakia, the United States, and the other democracies to hold fascist aggression in check, and an inner program of social and economic advance, can raise any prospect of defeating Chamberlain and bringing in an alternative government in the near future. The alternative to this is not a Labor government. The alternative is the continued domination of Chamberlain and the "National" government, with its more and more open support of fascism and fascist war, and all that this will mean for the future of Britain and the world in the next few years.

That a people's-front combination could defeat Chamberlain is even widely admitted in the government press, which openly counts, however, on the Labor Party Executive to prevent its realization. An examination of the election figures shows the relation of forces, and why a people's front is essential to defeat Chamberlain.

At the last general election, in 1935, out of 29,500,000 electors, 11,750,000 voted for the "National" government, 10,000,000 voted for the opposition, and 7,500,000 did not vote. Of the opposition, Labor represented 8,300,000, and the Liberals 1,500,000 (the Communists withdrew all their candidates but two to secure unity behind Labor). Since the general election there has been a growing current of public opinion against the government, which won the election on the basis of full and active support to the League of Nations as its main plank and has since pursued the opposite policy. The Labor Party, however, on its present basis, has been able to win only a portion of this opposition, much of which, though against Chamberlain, is not yet prepared to accept a Socialist program, and much of which is repelled by the division of the anti-government candidates and so relapses into non-voting. On the present basis of development there is no prospect whatever of Labor winning an absolute majority. To win a majority against Chamberlain will require decisive inroads into the ranks of the borderline supporters of Chamberlain and the non-voters. In the present stage of public opinion among these sections only a broad, united democratic and peace front could accomplish this successfully.

The system of constituencies in Britain reenforces this lesson. There is no second ballot, and division of the anti-government vote can give the seat to the government on a minority vote, as is already the case in over thirty constituencies. Labor's strength is in the industrial areas of North England, Scotland, and Wales. A big increase in Labor's vote in these areas would not give a majority in Parliament. In Southern England (excluding London and the Midlands), that is, in the predominantly agricultural, rentier, and light industry areas,

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where Labor organization is weak, the government holds 218 seats and Labor only thirty-five. If Labor were to win two-thirds of all government seats in the industrial North, in Scotland, and Wales, but fail to change this situation in the South and the Midlands, it would not win a majority. In these latter areas, remains of the Liberal Party still play a considerable role. Combination with the Liberal and general democratic and peace elements, is essential for a rapid victory at the next election.

This is to calculate only on the basis of existing electoral proportions. In fact, however, the effect of unity, of working-class unity and of the unity of a broad democratic peace front, on a positive immediate program, would awaken into political activity masses of the 7,500,000 non-voters, who could determine the issue, as well as millions of hesitant "National" voters. The example of France has shown this stimulating, mobilizing, and creative influence of unity and the People's Front in giving new confidence and strength to previously disheartened and apathetic millions.

The situation in Britain thus points clearly and urgently to the necessity of a people's front around the central core of the Labor Party and a united labor movement. The realization of this is undoubtedly spreading fast, and there is reason to hope that big changes may be realized in the whole political alignment in Britain. But there is no ground for easy optimism, especially in view of the shortness of time. The forces of opposition are still strongly entrenched in the dominant Labor and trade-union leadership; and these undoubtedly prefer the role of "loyal opposition" to Chamberlain rather than the heavy responsibility of leadership of all the working-class and democratic forces against the ruling finance-capitalist oligarchy in Britain and the consequent responsibility of government in a period of crisis. There is therefore a very big fight ahead to realize working-class unity and the people's front or peace alliance in Britain before it is too late; and the most that can yet be said is that the forces in support are gathering more strongly than ever before. On the outcome of this fight depend heavy issues for the whole future of Britain and the world.

Q. E. D.

"TOKYO, JUNE 3.—Lieutenant General Seishiro Itagaki, regarded by many as the best field commander in the army, was named War Minister today with a mandate to bring the Chinese war to a quick end. . . .

"General Itagaki and General Rensuke Isogai were the Japanese chieftains at Taierhchwang. Chinese attacked ferociously and the Japanese army retreated. It was called, and was generally believed to be, the most humiliating defeat that a Japanese army had suffered in the 2,598 years of Japan's military history." —United Press, June 3.

"NOBODY'S PASSING, BABY!"

Report on a Visit to Madrid

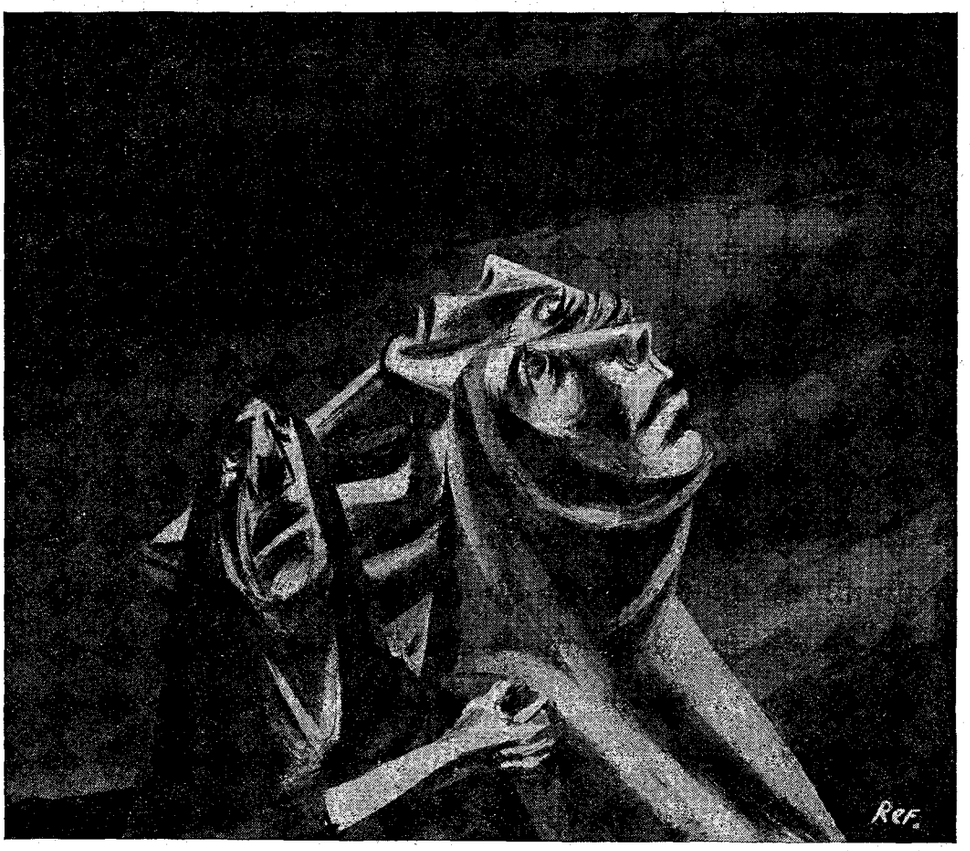
JOSEPH NORTH

Madrid, June 2 (By Cable).

IT'S eighteen months now, a long time in wartime. The enemy has been inside the gates, the Moors have been praying to Allah in Caso del Campo for a year and a half now. I chanced to get to town the night the German electrical battery rained four hundred shells into the city. There were some funeral processions the next day, white coffins for the young and black for the old. And the living went on in the life I have never imagined possible. Pilgrimages should be made to this beleaguered city to learn how to live.

I have never seen a more serene folk, stout-hearted and confident. And Madrid differs only in degree from the rest of Central Spain, where some eight million Spaniards live. They are hemmed in on three sides, their only outlet to the world is the Mediterranean coastline, and Italian ships hide in the coves.

Madrid has but one roadway, veritably its lifeline, to the lush, subtropical fields of Valencia, and Franco is pressing hard to come down the Teruel highway into that province and cut Castellon away from loyalist Spain. That is the picture, and is it any wonder Mussolini scans his maps in the *palazzio* and storms around with his chin stuck out? By all canons and clauses in military text books and by the heritage of von Ludendorff, this war should well be over. I have just returned from this area and can tell you the normality of life here is staggering. It would keel Il Duce over if he knew, and it will in the end, whether his best friends tell him or not. The morale of the people in Central Spain, the degree of organization they have perfected to supply their needs and to bulwark their defenses, is matchless. And they are not done perfecting. Never in the world has there been anything equaling this. Consider Madrid: I picked up a song from an urchin in the street the other day, which might well be the theme song of this Spanish drama. It was a popular Madrileno ditty, which says, *"Quieren pasar los Moros. Quieren pasar los Moros, mamita mia. No pasa nadie, no pasa nadie."* Literally it



Painting by Anton Refregier

Bombers

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means, "Those Moors want to pass. Those Moors want to pass, baby, but nobody's passing, baby, nobody's passing." They sing it clapping their hands in Andalusian fashion when they get off those dizzying *flamencos* that sound a thousand years old. Would it sound melodramatic to say a hundred thousand persons have determined to hold out until victory or death? When a Madrileno says it to you in Madrid, you believe him. It is a matter of fact here, and he doesn't have to tell you about those eighteen months of resistance. As the Madrileno speaks, he acts.

And nearly everyone you talk to says it if you get on the subject. "We'll hold out until victory—or death. Put that in your paper." The anarchist chambermaid, Natividad, in the Hotel Victoria, said it to me. Mayor Rafael Henche said it to me a little later the same day. The mayor described the city's difficulties: only half a pint of milk daily to Madrid's 63,000 children under the age of five. That seemed to worry him more than anything else—that and the traffic problem. He talked about semaphores and one-way streets while machine guns could be heard hammering away at University City, less than a mile from His Honor's offices.

In the face of ever-present danger the trivialities of ordinary life strike you as peculiarly heroic. The fact that twenty theaters and forty-six movies stay open and have been open every day since the Moors crossed the Manzanares; the fact that schools haven't shut down a single day, and that girls skip rope in shell-pocked streets. *Con pan o sin pan*—with bread or without bread—they resist. That is Negrín's adjuration to the people. The Madrileno adopted that slogan in his daily life long before it was issued. There is really little bread and not enough meat, no potatoes, no coffee, no sugar, no milk for adults. But there is plenty of *bacalao*, the dried, nourishing fish most visitors can't down. There are considerable lentils-and-beans and beans-and-lentils from the neighboring Guadalajara and Ciudad Real provinces. There is a minimum of food that provides a sufficiency of calories to keep the Castilian alert and even spry. He has never lost that pride in personal appearance, so typically Spanish. You can't get your shoes shined without waiting half an hour in line. Bookshops are crowded all day from the moment the doors open, and you can get any classic you wish in Spanish, including Mike Gold's *Judios Sin Dinero*. That's right, *Jews Without Money*. And it sells very well, comrade, a salesgirl told me. I have described the trenches about Madrid in recent *Daily Worker* stories. It is sufficient for this article merely to say that the fortifications have kept pace with the needs of the times. As the Germans moved heavier artillery in on Mt. Garabitas and various fronts here, Spaniards dug deeper trenches, perfecting them with steel, etc., and dug *refugios* at necessary points. True it is that the Madrilenos will hold out till victory—or until the last man is killed.

But Madrid is not all of loyalist Spain, someone may say. True, but it is not so far in the van. Alicante, Valencia, Castellon, where every man has built *refugios* for his family in the earth, have learned from Madrid, and there is a Popular Front, a political instrument of great force and suppleness to foster this heroism elsewhere. For the defense of Madrid is no miracle. It isn't merely a biochemical reaction peculiar to the Castilian. It derives from a complex of factors that amount to political awareness. It is a product of the violent hatred of oppression that the Castilian commoner was subjected to for centuries. Remember that the Madrileno worker in the main was Marxian for the last half century. This was a stronghold of Socialism in Spain since Marx's day. It was the cradle of Spanish patriotism, too. Goya drew some of his most powerful works in Madrid, depicting the resistance to Napoleon's grenadiers in 1808. The social revolution in 1931 and its fruits, particularly since the February 1936 elections, affected the Madrileno deeply. Now combine this republicanism, this syndicalism, and class consciousness—in other words, these attributes of the proletarian and middle classes—and you have the basis for the People's Front in these specific times. Get a government that represents this combination of economic, social, and psychological factors, and you get a people that will fight to the last to defend that government. And I am sure the Madrileno will not feel I am detracting from Castilian heroism by claiming the above as the basis for his sterling defense. There are no miracles in politics. If it could be done in Madrid it can be done in Valencia and Castellon and Barcelona. That is the task of the Popular Front and its component parties.

One other factor, last but far from least: the peasantry, the great preponderance of Spain. It requires a special article, which I shall do; but for the purpose of this short piece I can say this: the farmer feels he gained immeasurably by democracy. He wanted land; he got it. He can till it as he wishes, either collectively or individually. He has known this since the decree of Oct. 7, 1936, when the lands of the rebel landowners were turned over to him and the *caciques* were kicked out. He was doubly assured of it in the reiteration of the government's principles on May Day eve. Point eight of Negrín's thirteen points confirms it. And the peasant is ready for a fight to the last ditch for his land. There are villages I have been in where every youth in town has enlisted, and only men over forty and women work in the fields. And their families see them off to the railroad station. They realize it is the only way out. Yes, this trip to Central Spain has confirmed all I felt in Barcelona. Unless the Spanish people are literally annihilated by overwhelming materials, they cannot lose.

No, this war for liberty cannot be lost in Spain; but it can be lost in London, in Paris, in Washington. That is the big danger and there is no use blinking it.

IN THE SUDETEN REGIONS

Prague, May 26.

THERE was much rejoicing in Prague for a few days after the fateful weekend of May 21-24, especially because the first elections were very favorable to the left. The two parties which showed the greatest gains were the Communists and the National Socialists (the latter is the party of President Benes and is the most progressive of the republican parties). The Czech fascist parties were routed and Henlein succeeded only in holding what he had. But now it is realized that the relief may be temporary because of the recovery of the SDP (Henlein's party) and the diplomatic maneuvers of 10 Downing Street.

On Wednesday, May 25, I visited the Sudeten regions with Gabriel Péri of *l'Humanité* to see whether Henlein had recovered any lost ground. That was the day of the demonstration and funeral of the two Nazis shot while crossing the frontier. Eger, the "capital" of the Henlein movement, was our destination.

Between Monday morning and this Wednesday demonstration, the SDP exerted itself to the utmost to regain control. The demonstration and speeches were planned and carried out for just this purpose. All the talks were extravagantly ferocious. The crowd was lifted to a pitch of frenzied hatred, chauvinism, and war-fever. Again they were promised that Hitler would soon come marching in and then all problems would be solved. The two dead Nazis were converted into martyrs because they had given their lives for Hitler. "Germany will live even if we are shot," went a typical phrase from the mouth of Henlein. Little children, four, five, no more than eight years of age, marched out of the great town square in those grim, gray uniforms, doing the goose-step as best they could. Storm Troops practically took over the entire administration of the city. Again the "Sieg Heil!" and the "Heil Hitler!" from three out of every four persons in the street. The Nazi salute was now flaunted. Not a single store was open, because Henlein had ordered it so.

A half block away from the Markt-Platz, scene of the demonstration, is the Communist headquarters in Eger. The town has about forty Communists. Despite the terror, the headquarters remains open, and there are still pictures of Thaelmann and Stalin on the wall. These men are incredibly brave. They show absolutely no fear though they live in the shadow of momentary physical assault, and all have been attacked many times. They sleep in the party headquarters, ready for any emergency. As we spoke with them, Nazi Storm Troops passed by in large numbers and there was danger that the building would be attacked. One Communist seized an iron rod and stood near the inner door, near us. Others went into the outer room, guarding the door to the street. These men are the comrades of Dimitrov. How proud one is to call them comrades and to shake their hands!—THEODORE DRAPER.

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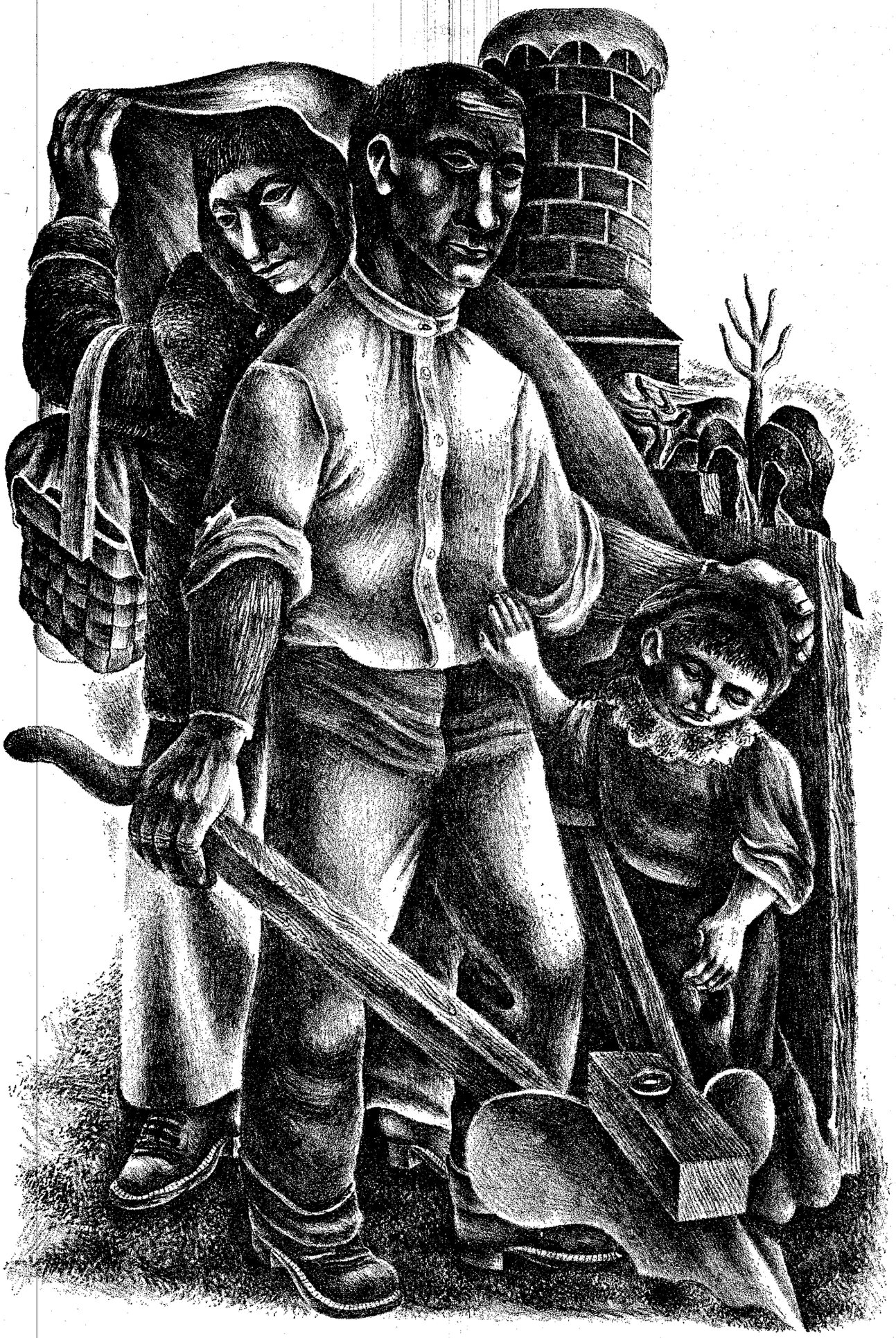

Lithograph by Mitchell Siporin

THE PEASANTS

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Another Good Speech

IT IS difficult to say whether Secretary Hull's speech before the Tennessee Bar Association was merely a restatement of lofty principles, involving no practical measures for their realization, or whether it was a cautious intimation that the United States is preparing to emerge from the fog of isolationism and inaction into which it has been permitted to drift. Mr. Hull has made good speeches in the past, but their effect has frequently been to raise hopes which were speedily dashed by Mr. Hull himself.

Yet there may be more than mere words in the offer to join with other nations for "the restoration and strengthening of sound and constructive international economic relationships," for the "limitation and progressive reduction of armaments," for "humanizing by common agreement the rules and practices of warfare," and for "exploring all other methods of revitalizing the spirit of international cooperation." The fact that this statement is made in the midst of the crisis in Central Europe and so soon after the United States has reminded the Nazi government of its obligations under the Kellogg-Briand pact may well indicate that this country is preparing to assume leadership in the defense of peace. This is perhaps hinted at in the following passage in the Hull speech:

> There was never a time in our national history when the influence of the United States in support of international law was more urgently needed than at present—to serve both our own best interests and those of the entire human race.

But the very fact that we are compelled to speak conditionally, to use "perhaps" and "may" regarding every passage in Mr. Hull's address shows what is wrong with the administration's foreign policy. Good speeches unaccompanied by action have thus far failed to swerve Hitler, Mussolini, and the Mikado one inch from their predatory goals. And an instance of the futility of mere words came the very next day after Mr. Hull's address. Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles had issued a statement expressing "the emphatic reprobation" of the American government at the barbarous bombing of civilian populations. The reply of the Japanese and German-Italian warmakers was—new bombing outrages with casualties running into the thousands.

Not only has the administration failed to implement Roosevelt's quarantine-the-aggressors speech of October 5, but its policy, as expressed in the Neutrality Act and the Spanish embargo, has been in the very opposite direction. In his Nashville address Secretary Hull intimated the manner in which this situation might be changed when he urged "a strong and united public opinion" to back up the principles he enunciated.

In other words, what is needed is a greatly increased barrage of telegrams and resolutions to compel the lifting of the embargo and the revision of the Neutrality Act.

The *Nation* Sneers

IT IS a bit surprising to find the *Nation* joining hands with the reactionary press in a longish editorial sneer at the tenth national convention of the Communist Party. We refer our readers to the article by A. B. Magil in this issue of NEW MASSES for a proper estimate of the convention, which completely refutes the *Nation's* position. Here we shall confine ourselves to a few specific objections.

Like the tory press, the *Nation* is not to be taken in by the Communist convention. American liberals, it feels, "might first of all view with some suspicion the violence of the conversion." And it describes the Communist Party's approach as "a foolish strategy because it is too clumsy to be taken seriously and too devious to be practiced wholeheartedly."

It would be unfortunate, indeed, if sincere liberals should be misled by the *Nation* into adopting an attitude of suspicion toward the Communist efforts to achieve a united democratic front against reaction and fascism. It need hardly be said who would profit from such divisive suspicion. The Communist policy is no trick or maneuver, but a serious program of action that is being taken seriously by increasing sections of the labor and progressive forces of the country. What the *Nation* describes as a sudden about-face in regard to democracy has been basic to Communism since the days of Marx and Engels. And the present strong emphasis on the defense of democracy—necessitated not by any deep-laid plots to snare with honey those that cannot be lured with vinegar, but by the very real threat of fascism—is at least three years old, dating from the period of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. As for the utilization of American revolutionary traditions, as far back as April 1934, in the manifesto issued by its eighth national convention, the Communist Party claimed the heritage of 1776 and 1861. That it did not do so earlier was due to an attitude which, as Earl Browder points out in his book, *The People's Front,* was "foisted upon the radical movement some generations ago by the sectarian influences that dominated the Socialist Party."

And though the *Nation* is so concerned about the Communist Party's loss of revolutionary ardor, it has no hesitation in denouncing as alien to the American tradition that section in the new Communist constitution which states: "No party member shall have personal or political relationship with confirmed Trotskyites, Lovestoneites, or other known enemies of the party and the working class." (Incidentally, the *Nation,* rushing into print before the constitution was actually adopted, quotes this from the original draft in which the word "confirmed" was omitted.)

We do not think the liberals for whom the *Nation* professes to speak would regard as unreasonable or doctrinaire the simple proposition that no decent person should have personal or political relationship with labor spies and strikebreakers. What else are the Trotskyites and Lovestoneites but spies, wreckers, and strikebreakers, as their activities in the American trade-union movement, as well as in the Soviet Union and Spain, have amply demonstrated? The only difference is that they employ pseudo-Marxist terminology in their double-dealing. Nor do we think that democratic-minded Americans, who have absorbed as part of the American tradition a feeling of hatred and revulsion toward everything associated with the name of Benedict Arnold, will feel, once they are acquainted with the facts, any such tender solicitude for the modern Benedict Arnolds as do the oh-so-solicitous editors of the *Nation.*

A Setback for Reaction

THE passage of the relief-recovery bill in the Senate by the overwhelming vote of 60 to 10 marked another setback for the coalition of reactionary Republicans and Democrats that until recently was having things its own way. The Senate bill, carrying a total of $3,722,905,000, is on the whole an improvement over the House measure, since it adds $300,000,000 for the

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expansion of the federal-housing program. This was one of President Roosevelt's original recommendations, but was omitted from the House bill. It should most certainly be included in the final version that is now being whipped into shape by Senate and House conferees.

Another group of conferees is wrestling with the wages-and-hours bill. Here the differences between the Senate and House versions are greater. Agreement has already been reached, however, on a minimum wage of 25 cents an hour as provided by the House measure. Whatever the final form in which this and the relief-recovery bill will pass, it is evident that on these two questions the New Deal and the progressive forces of the country have won important victories which should help solidify the front of democracy and progress in the congressional elections.

New Attack on NLRB

TIME was when editorial writers—the New York *Times* setting the pace—declared the National Labor Relations Act unconstitutional. And having judged the act contrary to all fundamental law of the land, the editorials urged violation of so illegal a statute.

During the session of the United States Supreme Court just ended, the Wagner Act and the board created under it have been upheld in a series of decisions. In the Pacific & Pennsylvania Greyhound Line case, the Court granted the right of the board to order the dissolution of a company union; and upheld its further right to decide that such an organization can be designated a company union even though the company goes through the motions of withdrawing official support. In the Santa Clara Packing Co. case, the Court approved the board's power to bring within the jurisdiction of the Wagner Act a company shipping only 25 percent of its goods outside the state where all the goods were bought. In the Mackay Radio case, the Court agreed with the board's contention that strikers remain employees of a company during labor troubles, and in addition that unfair labor practices engaged in before, during, or after a strike are violations of the law.

Moreover, by refusing to review NLRB's order that Remington-Rand reinstate strikers with back pay, the board's power to force reinstatement was again affirmed. These decisions, plus the important order to federal courts allowing the board to reopen the Republic Steel case to correct procedural omissions in conformity with the findings of the Kansas City Stockyards case, placed the NLRB in a stronger position than ever.

And now the editorial writers have changed their tune. Instead of condemning the Wagner Act as unconstitutional, they contend that while the statute may conceivably be legal, it violates the spirit of the founding fathers. Which can be labeled one of the neatest editorial sophistries of a generation. But it is also a dangerous one, because future attacks on the Wagner Act will take the course already attempted in the present Congress: the offering of amendments intended to emasculate the act and render it impotent to hold the anti-labor employers within bounds.

Salem in Modern Dress

THREE hundred years after Salem, a special Massachusetts State Legislative Commission once again set about hunting witches. The commission's report, a voluminous affair of some 2,500 pages, devotes one hundred pages to anti-Semitic and Nazi organizations, but manages to whitewash the fascist groups. The remainder of the report deals with the Communist Party. And the essence of the findings can be summed up in the statement that the union movement is "Communist" inspired, dominated, and led.

Of course, the investigators knew before they began their search what they wanted to find. From the beginning their problem was to prove what they had long suspected: the labor movement is a Communist plot, and the more successful the unions, the thicker the plot. The committee therefore calls for a drive against the Communist Party, the trade unions, and progressive and liberal organizations of all descriptions.

Frank J. Manning of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee and executive committeeman of the Boston Democratic City Committee described the investigation as an attempt "to disrupt and destroy the morale of powerful labor organizations." Another CIO official labeled it "malicious, false, and anti-labor." On the other hand, Mayor Frank Hague of Jersey City was vastly pleased at the result of the investigation. Which in one sense precludes further comment on the whole affair.

Hagueism Spreads

THE disease of repression, first indication of fascism, is catching. In Newark, not far from Jersey City, Commissioner Joseph Byrne, Jr., who ran for office on a "support Hague" platform, issued a speaking permit to Norman Thomas, Socialist. As Mr. Thomas began to talk, a mob of city toughs, Nazi sympathizers, and Legionnaires drowned out his voice with a brass band, pelted him with eggs, and started a riot. Subsequently, Commissioner Byrne—whose police were unwilling to keep order—stated that in the future he would ban all meetings except those called by "patriotic and military organizations."

Mr. Thomas has spoken in Newark often before, and no attempt was made to stop him and no mob gathered. But the example of Jersey City inspired the vigilantes, the corporations behind them, and the politicians who curry Mayor Hague's favor, to prevent a speech directed against the Jersey City boss.

Such violations of civil liberties call for effective political unity of the labor movement and of all progressives. But it is lamentable that Mr. Thomas has failed to learn the lesson he himself has stressed. Merely to denounce Mayor Hague or to fight him in the courts is not sufficient. The democratic front must be built if Mayor Hague's domination is to be broken in Jersey City in the same way as the brutal, repressive domination of the steel companies was ended in the little mill towns that ring Pittsburgh. And as the democratic front forms, the demand must increase throughout the country for federal action against Hague, as well as for an investigation by the La Follette civil-liberties committee.

Lords of the Ether

CHARGES made by George H. Payne that lobbyists of the radio industry had influenced members of the Federal Communications Commission fortify the impression that a thoroughgoing investigation of the radio industry is long overdue. Payne, a member of the commission, appeared in support of a resolution now before the House Rules Committee calling for such an investigation. His testimony came shortly after Representative McFarlane of Texas inserted in the *Congressional Record* serious charges against the Radio Corporation of America and the American Telephone & Telegraph Co., involving collusion in a case brought by the Department of Justice in Wilmington, Del., in 1932. Representative McFarlane has also accused two unnamed former United States Senators of accepting bribes in connection with the case.

The monopolistic control of radio broadcasting is one of the scandals of American politics. The air waves have been called our "last great resource," and the Radio Act of 1927 explicitly established the ether as public domain which could not be owned or controlled by private interests. Yet the fact is that with the connivance of the Federal Radio Commission and its successor, the Federal Communications Com-

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mission, Wall Street monopolies have looted this invaluable resource as they have looted all of the natural wealth of the country. And the remarkable part about it is that under the law they are not required to pay a cent to the government for the privilege of playing fast and loose with the people's property. Just how completely the air waves are dominated by trustified capital is evident from the fact that out of a total transmission power of 2,634,200 watts, 88.4 percent is controlled by the two major networks, National Broadcasting Co. (a wholly owned subsidiary of RCA) and the Columbia Broadcasting System, and 92.9 percent by these two and the Mutual Broadcasting System. Thus three powerful companies dictate the character not only of the entertainment but of the ideas that each day enter more than 22,000,000 American homes. It is time Congress looked into a situation which is charged with danger for American liberties.

Democracy at Harvard

HARVARD'S refusal to reinstate Drs. Walsh and Sweezy, in accordance with the unanimous recommendation of the special faculty committee headed by Ralph Barton Perry, raises an issue as fundamental as that of academic freedom: the issue of faculty government. Originally the Harvard Economics Department had recommended both men for three-year normal reappointments. When the administration and corporation overruled this recommendation and voted two-year terminating appointments, the department renewed its recommendation. But the administration and corporation remained adamant. According to the special faculty committee, administration action was due not to antagonism to the economic views and labor activities of the two men, but to the automatic application of an administrative policy which was not understood by the economics-department staff. The committee is at pains to point out, however, that the policy (limiting promotions arbitrarily to two men and automatically dropping instructors not recommended for promotion) was unwise, "subordinated educational values to financial exigencies which proved unreal," inflicted unfair treatment upon two brilliant teachers, and deprived the university of necessary services in labor economics and economic theory.

Of greater significance is the recognition that the policy and its effects were the result of arbitrary procedures followed in its formulation, interpretation, and execution. The absence of democratic faculty government at Harvard is now reemphasized by the university's rejection of the conclusions of the special committee, which President Conant had officially appointed after pressure from the faculty.

The Harvard experience ought to come as a warning to the Board of Higher Education of New York, which is at present formulating a by-law for the democratic reorganization of the four city colleges. Provisions for the democratic election of department heads at regular intervals, for the extension of faculty memberships to younger members of the staff, for the democratic consideration of appointments and promotions and other matters of educational policy are much to be desired. Events at Harvard suggest, however, that unless the university budget is also to be formulated by those engaged in educational work rather than handed down from the top by those primarily concerned with finances, all the values to be achieved in a democratic set-up may be lost. It also emphasizes the need for extensive organization of teachers, even in a set-up that seems to be democratically ordered. All the more power, therefore, to the American Federation of Teachers, which at Harvard originally initiated a petition of 131 faculty members that resulted in the appointment of the special committee, and which at New Haven this Saturday is picketing a meeting of the Yale Corporation to ask the reinstatement of Jerome Davis.

Cracks in the Rebel Lineup

REPORTS from numerous authentic sources indicate that things do not go so well in rebel Spain.

The strain between the Falangist and the Carlist wings of Franco's so-called united nationalist movement is rapidly nearing the breaking point. The unsuccessful Falangist revolt of April 1937 was the first symptom. (The leaders of that revolt are still in a Salamanca prison.)

Immediately afterward came the widely publicized speech made by Gen. Juan Yague, demanding the immediate release of thousands of Falangist prisoners in rebel territory. That was followed several days ago by the spectacular jail-break as a result of which 796 Falangists successfully escaped from Franco's clutches.

Besides the conflict between the Falangists and the Carlists, there is the growing friction between the Spanish rebel officers and the German and Italian officers, the former suspecting the latter of intentions to retain their military and economic stranglehold on the country even after the conclusion of the war.

More important is the widespread and still growing unrest among Franco's Spanish troops, reflecting the deepening resentment of the Spanish masses. Mass opposition to the foreign invaders is intensified by the information passed by word of mouth (the rebel press is discreetly silent about it) that German and Italian planes and fliers specialize in bombing and destroying unprotected Spanish cities and killing thousands of non-combatants. Underground anti-fascist propaganda is gaining momentum. Thus in Seville, according to the latest reports, thousands of leaflets were circulated bearing the slogan: "Down with Fascism! Long live the Republic!" and similar slogans were scratched on walls and fences throughout the city.

Two months ago Franco proclaimed his victory over the loyalists. Obviously he was a little premature. So were Messrs. Chamberlain and Mussolini with their, it now seems, abortive Anglo-Italian pact, which took a speedy Franco victory for granted. A Franco victory is very far off. And with every additional day it recedes farther and farther to the background.

The Chinese Withdraw

AND the great victories which Japanese bombing planes have been scoring over the defenseless women and children of Canton cannot hide the fact that for the Japanese imperialists also, both at the front and at home, the difficulties are piling up. This is true despite the fact that during the past week the Japanese succeeded in retaking Lanfeng and capturing Kaifeng, while the fall of Chengchow, immediate objective of the Japanese drive, seems imminent. The Chinese are executing an orderly withdrawal southward from the plains around Kaifeng and Chengchow, where the terrain is exceptionally favorable for the highly mechanized Japanese army, to strongly prepared positions on the slopes of the Tafu and Tapeh Mountains. Here they expect to be able to hold up for a long time the Japanese advance on Hankow, provisional capital of China.

Meanwhile the reorganization of the Japanese cabinet, necessitated by the bogging of the Japanese war machine and the growing crisis at home, has been completed—for the present, at least—with the appointment of Gen. Seishiro Itagaki as War Minister. The new cabinet, in which Gen. Kazushige Ugaki has become Foreign Minister, Gen. Sadao Araki, leader of the most extreme military fascists, Minister of Education, and Seihin Ikeda, prominent banker and agent of the gigantic Mitsui trust, Finance Minister, is a step toward the complete fascization of the Japanese state. The government of imperial Japan has finally been handed over to the army and big business.

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Forsythe's Page

Ben's Little Boy, Louie

DEAR LOUIS ADAMIC: I was reading that review John Chamberlain did of your book,* the one in which he said that your opinions will be so commonly accepted in this country in a few years that they'll be trite. If that's so, I want to be in on the ground floor with my recollections. I suppose we're pretty vain in thinking that anybody will look at what we've written a hundred years from now, but if you're to be as important as John prophesies, they'll want to know everything about you.

The first time I saw you was probably at one of those famous Calverton binges. You were a tall, skinny guy. Very handsome. I liked you from the start and I think you liked me, because later, when you got married, Stella and you came to our house and we used to go to your parties. You were at Scheffel Hall that night when Red Lewis started the row with Harry Hansen, and I think you made Red sore later by refusing to keep going with him when the dinner broke up. That was the time when you were helping Red on that perennial of his, the labor novel.

We saw Stella and you just before you left for Europe, and one of my proudest moments was when you mentioned me as your friend in *Native's Return*. When you got back you came in to see me and began telling me about things you had seen in Yugoslavia and particularly about the radicals who were being tortured by the police. Those radicals were all Communists and they provided the sole opposition to a cruel dictatorship, and you went to see them in great secrecy when they got out of jail. What the police had done to them was so revolting and horrible that I couldn't write it here. You saw those tortured men with your own eyes and when you began telling me about them, you broke down and couldn't go on.

But the next time I saw you, you were back in the old rut you'd been in before you left for the old country. The Yugoslav Communists might be all right; but the American Communists were impossible. I think the patriotic Slavs in this country gave you quite a riding for what you had said about the King, and you went to live in a hotel so you wouldn't be bothered by them. In any event, I didn't see you again for months. Then one night we were in a restaurant together and you were very annoyed at somebody because he was talking politics. It seems you didn't want to talk politics. The next remembrance is of a party where you had been talking to Louis Fischer. There had evidently been a hot argument, and you were worked up. I heard Fischer suggesting that you have lunch later in the week with him when you could go into it without a lot of people interfering, but you waved him away almost frantically, as if you felt that what he might say would scorch you.

After that you seem to have gone entirely into hiding. From what I heard from time to time, the only person you were seeing steadily was Ben Stolberg. That is when I first heard you referred to as Ben's little boy, Louie. The charge seemed foolish because it was difficult for me to think of anybody taking Ben seriously, but from that point of view this new book is shocking. If you didn't see Ben so constantly, it might be taken as a matter of coincidence or of mental telepathy, but for anyone who knows Ben and who knows you, it is either a question of your influencing him or his influencing you. I suppose you will know which it is.

However, since it is a matter of your ideas coinciding so exactly with Stolberg's, I think it is pressing things a bit to criticize John L. Lewis or Harry Bridges for not receiving you with open arms when you come to interview them. I happen to have heard previously about the Bridges interview. If you think he was suspicious of you, you're quite right. Everything printed in your new book justifies him in being wary of you. The whole line of your development for years has been clear. You don't attempt to hide it but you act hurt at the thought that Lewis and Bridges wouldn't take you to their bosoms. The CIO leaders may be everything you say about them, but they certainly aren't half-witted. There is little chance that they are going to be in love with you when they know, from your own words, that you have no intention of being favorable to them.

As a matter of truth, Louie, I should think that at best you would be a bad interviewer. As I know from listening to you, you have a habit of lecturing rather than listening; which may be good in a debater but not in an interviewer. If the reader will follow your book with that in mind, it will be apparent that you get almost nothing from a man you talk to but confirmation of your prejudices. For book critics to refer to you as a great journalist is laughable. What you are is a kindly, sincere man who is a 128 percent American because you were an immigrant. Being the son of an immigrant, I know exactly how you feel; but, fortunately or unfortunately, I haven't been elevated to your position as the Voice of America. I don't need to worry about the effect of such adulation.

As a general thing, I believe I could set up in opposition to you on practically every ground. Take Arthur E. Morgan of the TVA. I happen to know the gentleman and I consider him among the choice fuzzy-wuzzies of history. Without knowing a thing about the TVA controversy, I will wager you that Arthur E. Morgan is wrong. He can't miss. If you think this is only hindsight on my part, I refer you to my associates. Your admiration for the old fuzzy-wuzzy is almost a complete characterization of your lack of judgment. If you could have somehow worked Dr. Morgan into that story about the ghost in the Millville church, it would have been perfect. Did you read the first reports of the TVA hearings, where Dr. Morgan was able to substantiate nothing of his original charges? I could also have told you that months ago—not because I knew anything directly but because I know Dr. Morgan. The old gent could quite easily haunt a church; he could never run anything as complicated as TVA.

The thing I admire most about you, Louie, is your concern for the foreign-born worker. But is there any group which has worked more loyally for the foreign-born worker than the Communist Party? Most of the men of your race are in the heavy industries and in coal. Is there a union with better traditions than the United Mine Workers? It was the Great Steel Strike, headed by William Z. Foster, which aroused the sentiment of the nation and caused the steel trust to concede that it could exist even if the men—your countrymen—didn't work twelve hours a day, seven days a week. The AF of L steel unions got nowhere; the CIO has organized Big Steel and will soon organize Little Steel. In view of this, it is hard to understand your animosity toward the CIO.

However, you have done well; nobody can deny it. The best critics admire you; the best people look up to you; if you haven't a syndicated column soon, like Dorothy Thompson, it will be your own fault. You have reached a point where you are regarded as a symbol of Americanism. It matters very little whether you have used Ben Stolberg's ideas or he has used yours; you are a success. By a happy set of circumstances, you have managed to achieve a point of view which is perfect for this stage of history. What you have to say means nothing in practical terms but everything in terms of that longing of all men for peace and quiet and security. We are to be some sort of strange, happy, mystic America; far from the madding crowd; far from the noisy politicians and the harsh facts of economics. And you will be a leader, Louie, because everybody will insist on the inventor of this paradise being a leader in its management. I wish you luck and all I can say in the way of advice is that you will be far better able to lead if you will free yourself from leading strings. It works that way.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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COMMUNISM AND DEMOCRACY

The Tenth Convention of the Communist Party

A. B. MAGIL

You have seen their faces. You have seen them in the factories and shops, on the farms, on the streets of the cities, in the schools, in the homes. You have seen and known these delegates to the tenth national convention of the Communist Party of the United States. Theirs is the face of America—the America that works, that creates, that suffers and hopes, that draws its strength from many peoples and yet is peculiarly, from Maine to California, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, one people.

It is impossible in the brief space of a single article to compress all the richness and variety, the deep wisdom and human warmth of this extraordinary convention of an extraordinary political party. Truly, as Earl Browder, general secretary of the party, said in his concluding words, the convention "registers a coming to maturity of our party in American political life." All that I can do is to attempt to convey some fragmentary conception of what this convention means.

Unity—this was the central emphasis of the Communist convention, its animating idea. Unity of the labor movement, unity of the entire American people in a democratic front to defeat big-business reaction at the polls and carry through a program that meets the people's needs. At the unforgettable mass meeting at Madison Square Garden that opened the convention (22,000 in the Garden, thousands more on the outside unable to get in) Browder said:

> This convention opening tonight has the prosaic but historic task of hammering out a program for such unity. It will be not a program drawn merely from the heads of the Communists. It will be a program drawn from the life of the people, a program which the majority already understands and desires, a program capable of welding the majority of the people into unity now, approaching the crucial congressional elections.

How well did the convention succeed in accomplishing this task? Before attempting an answer, let us say a few words about the delegates themselves and about the manner in which the convention was organized and conducted.

The national convention of the Communist Party was organized more democratically than that of any other American political party. This may sound like hyperbole, but it happens to be in accord with the sober facts. Democratic and Republican national conventions are held every four years, in contrast to Communist conventions, which meet every two years. The delegates at the conventions of the two major parties consist almost entirely of professional politicians, drawn largely from the ranks of the comfortable and well-to-do. The rank and file of the party have at best only an indirect and limited influence in determining the course of the party and the platform it adopts. The smoke-filled-room technique, rather than democratic discussion, determines the fate of candidates and issues.

As for the Socialist Party, can one speak of real democracy in a party which is so rent with strife and confusion that its rank and file—those that are not too disgusted to attend meetings—do not have the opportunity to form clear opinions concerning the most important problems facing the American people?

What distinguished the Communist convention was not merely that its delegates were elected by the members from their own ranks, or even the thoroughly democratic manner in which the sessions were conducted, but, above all, the fact that *the entire membership—75,000 men and women—actively participated in making the final decisions through discussions organized in every party branch during the two months preceding the convention.* This is a new, higher type of democracy, the democracy not only of formal voting, but of collective discussion and collective work. It is this kind of democracy that operates in every phase of the life of the Soviet Union.

The delegates at the convention represented a party which in two years has nearly doubled its membership—from 40,000 to 75,000—and today has branches in every state in the Union and in Alaska. This party, as was emphasized by William Z. Foster, its national chairman, has absorbed and revitalized the best in the traditions of the old Socialist Labor Party, the Socialist Party, and the Industrial Workers of the World. Who were these delegates? Eighty percent of them—Ham Fish, Hearst, Senator McNaboe, *et al.,* please note—or 617 out of a total of 776, were native-born Americans. All the others were naturalized American citizens. Sixty-five percent were industrial workers, 15 percent professionals, 10 percent white-collar workers, and 2.5 percent farmers (far too few farmers in the party, everybody agreed). There were also twenty-one housewives, four students, and two small businessmen. The professionals included teachers, social workers, writers, newspapermen, lawyers, actors, musicians, and one minister. Fifty-nine percent of the delegates were members of trade unions—AF of L, CIO, and independent—and of these, 57 percent hold office in their unions. Nineteen percent of the delegates were women, though the proportion of women in the party's membership is considerably higher (about 33 percent). Negroes constituted 13 percent of the delegates and played a prominent role at the convention. This is a party, too, that draws its strength from the youth: 65 percent of the delegates were thirty-five years old or younger, 30 percent were between thirty-six and fifty, and only 5 percent were over fifty.

These are the statistics; but they tell little of the individual human beings. Take Patrick McGraw for example. I picked him out at random from the Minnesota delegation. He works at the Coolerator Company in Duluth and is chairman of the grievance committee of the local union of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. He is a tall, quiet, dark-haired Irishman, thirty-one years old, married, and has two children. Reared in the Catholic religion, he received all his education, with the exception of two years, in parochial schools. Out of a job a few years ago, he joined the Labor Advancement Association, a local organization of the unemployed. Among its members were Communists. "I saw that the party members always seemed to have the right policy and were the spark plugs of the organization." In the fall of 1935 he joined the party. Just an average American. Yet something more—a Communist. That's what makes the difference.

Or there's June Collier of Portland, Ore., a tall, good-looking girl of twenty-four. She's active in the Women's Auxiliary of the International Woodworkers of America and has been in a lot of tough labor-battles. Joined the Communist Party a year ago ("It seems as if I'd been looking for it a long time"). I heard her speak at the meeting of the Women's Commission of the convention. There was something bold and confident in her manner, yet essentially simple and modest, as she told of activities among the women of her state. "I wanted to tell you of the work we've been doing and of the fun we've had doing it and of the things still to be done."

"The fun we've had doing it." Yes, there's nothing dour about these Communists. They get a kick out of their work. And seeing them in action helps to explain why it is that 75,000 Communists are able to influence hundreds of thousands and even millions. They are flesh and blood of the common people, but at the same time leaders among them, leaders in the shops and trade unions, in fraternal and cultural organizations, in the neighborhoods in which they live. They are leaders because they know not only how to teach but to learn from the people, to learn in the course of the daily practical work how to solve the little problems and the big, how to organize and unite thousands and millions for victory. And they are leaders because they are part of the great international brotherhood of Communists that

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looks toward democracy's future as well as its present, that works not only with devotion and self-sacrifice, but with science, the science of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin.

In what direction do these Communists lead? Listen to Earl Browder speaking. This Kansas-born descendant of pioneers, with the compact body and mind, held the attention of some four thousand delegates and invited guests at Carnegie Hall with a speech which the New York *Times* described as of "unparalleled length"—it lasted more than four hours. But as Alex Bittelman, member of the Communist Party's political bureau, told the convention the next day, the speech, which Browder delivered on behalf of the party's central committee, was unparalleled in something more than length. Its penetrating analysis of the major issues facing the American people, its grasp of the dynamics of social development, its feeling for the American tradition and for the peculiar values of our democracy, and its elucidation of the course that must be followed if America is to escape the horrors of fascism and war rank it as one of the most important political documents of recent years. "Jobs, Security, Democracy, and Peace"—this slogan epitomizes the program which the Communists propose. And the achievement of this program requires the building of the democratic front—the unity of all progressive and democratic forces behind a common platform and a single candidate for each elective office.

Two years ago the Communist Party, at its ninth national convention, raised as the central slogan of the election campaign, "Progress versus Reaction, Democracy versus Fascism," and called for the defeat at all costs of the candidates of reaction and fascism represented on a national scale by the Republican Party. At the same time the Communists warned that many reactionaries were entrenched in the Democratic Party, and urged the unification of all progressives in a new political alignment. Events since then have demonstrated how well the Communists understood the forces that were molding the political life of our country. For nearly two years a coalition of tory Republicans and Democrats has succeeded in bottling up the larger part of the New Deal program and frustrating the desires so emphatically expressed by the American people in the 1936 elections. Now reaction, playing on the fears, confusions, and sufferings arising from the economic crisis which the sabotage of the economic royalists themselves helped precipitate, is preparing to capture new positions in Congress in an effort to plough under many of the gains made under the New Deal.

"The outcome of the 1938 elections," said Browder in his report, "will determine the immediate direction of the United States on domestic and foreign policy in conditions of national and world crisis. Clearly they will influence to a great degree the alignment for the presidential election of 1940, and thereby the whole future of America and the world."

Browder pointed out that the New Deal

THE BIG PARADE

John Helliker

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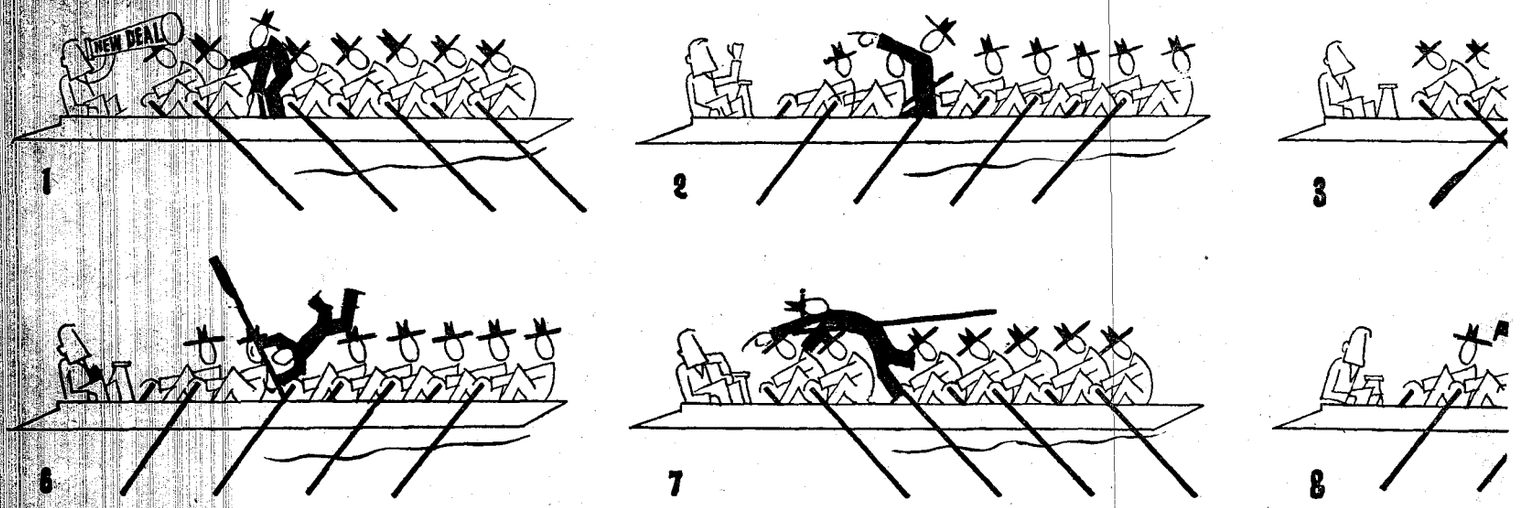

wing of the Democratic Party "furnishes today the broadest framework, albeit a precarious and incomplete one, for the gathering of the full forces of the democratic front of the majority of the people in the 1938 elections." As for the program of the democratic front, several of its points have been expressed in President Roosevelt's recent speeches, "some are formulated more or less adequately in measures adopted or before Congress, although it must be emphasized that Roosevelt's administration is far from realizing a rounded program, and even falters and fails on many points of its own pronouncements," others have been put forward by the CIO and by farm and other progressive organizations. The election platform which the Communist convention adopted represents, therefore, a synthesis and rounding out of all these proposals. Again quoting Browder:

> The program of the democratic front is not a Socialist program. It is the minimum of those measures necessary, under capitalism, to preserve and extend democracy, all those things which have been the heart of the American tradition in the past, ever since the revolutionary foundation of the United States. The program of the democratic front is squarely based upon traditional Americanism.

He added, however:

> For the avoidance of all misunderstanding now and in the future, let us make clear beyond the slightest doubt that the Communist Party is in no way weakening or abandoning its goal of the complete realization of Socialism for America at the earliest possible moment, which means as soon as Socialism gains the support of the majority. *Because* of this fact, and not, as some seem to think, *despite* it or *refuting* it, we are the most consistent and loyal sector in the democratic front. In our loyalty to Socialism lies the key to our loyalty to the democratic front.
>
> Our slogan, which we take directly from Lenin, is: "Through democracy to Socialism; through Socialism to the highest and most complete realization of democracy."

Here it should be pointed out that the democratic front is a stage in the development of the people's front, a stage corresponding to the lower degree of political organization of the workers, farmers, and middle classes in this country than in Spain and France. An example of the democratic front was the coalition that was formed behind the slate headed by Mayor LaGuardia in the New York municipal election last year, a coalition that ranged from progressive Republicans to Communists.

It was around the problem of building the democratic front in every part of the United States and on a national scale that the discussion at the convention centered. Delegate after delegate recounted the experience of the Communist Party and the labor and democratic movement as a whole in his locality, subjected this experience to critical analysis, and discussed in the light of Browder's report the tasks for the future. The question of the struggle for peace, for an effective policy of collective economic measures to quarantine the fascist aggressors, and for the lifting of the embargo on Spain formed an integral part of this discussion. One of the newspapermen covering the convention remarked at the "staying power" of the delegates. Yes, these were serious men and women, discussing the most serious problems in the world. And they did not waste time. But they knew how to relax too, as they showed toward the end when several delegates offered some impromptu songs and Mike Gold recited a homespun ballad of his own, *An Old Delegate Speaks.*

A few words concerning the two subjects that seemed to attract the greatest attention in the press: Browder's appeal to the Catholics, and the new constitution of the Communist Party. Browder's statement was, of course, not an appeal for the reconciliation of the principles of Catholicism and Communism, but for the collaboration of the millions of Catholics who cherish democracy with the Communists and all democratic sections of the population. This appeal is of exceptional importance in the United States where the Catholics have themselves been subjected to persecution and discrimination by reactionary forces and where, nevertheless, the majority of the hierarchy seek to lure the membership of the Church into supporting reaction on every field. By answering in simple unambiguous terms those questions concerning Communism which disturb many sincere Catholics, Browder sought to clear the atmosphere of misunderstanding and make possible the brotherly cooperation of Catholics and Communists for common democratic aims.

The adoption of the new constitution was itself an expression of the democratic character of the Communist Party. Like all the questions before the convention, the draft of the constitution was the subject of systematic discussion by the membership over the course of many weeks. As a result of this discussion, the convention constitution-committee had before it 102 amendments from forty-five party organizations and individual members. Many of these amendments, however, came from previously held state, county, and section conventions and represented the winnowing and synthesis of a much larger number that had been submitted to those conventions. Thus it may be said that literally hundreds of proposals were made by the rank and file for improvement of the original draft.

The new constitution is not new in the sense of representing a statement of new principles. It is, rather, as Browder pointed out, "the codification of our existing practice and presents our fundamental program in the terms of modern America and in the light of the Seventh World Congress of the International Communist movement." As such it provides an official refutation of the canard that the Communist Party is an enemy of democracy or advocates force and violence. The preamble points out that the Communist Party "is a working-class political party, carrying forward today the traditions of Jefferson, Paine, Jackson, and Lincoln and of the Declaration of Independence"; that it "upholds the achievements of democracy" and "defends the United States Constitution against its reactionary enemies who would destroy democracy and all popular liberties." It also makes clear that the party seeks to "unite and lead the American people to extend these democratic

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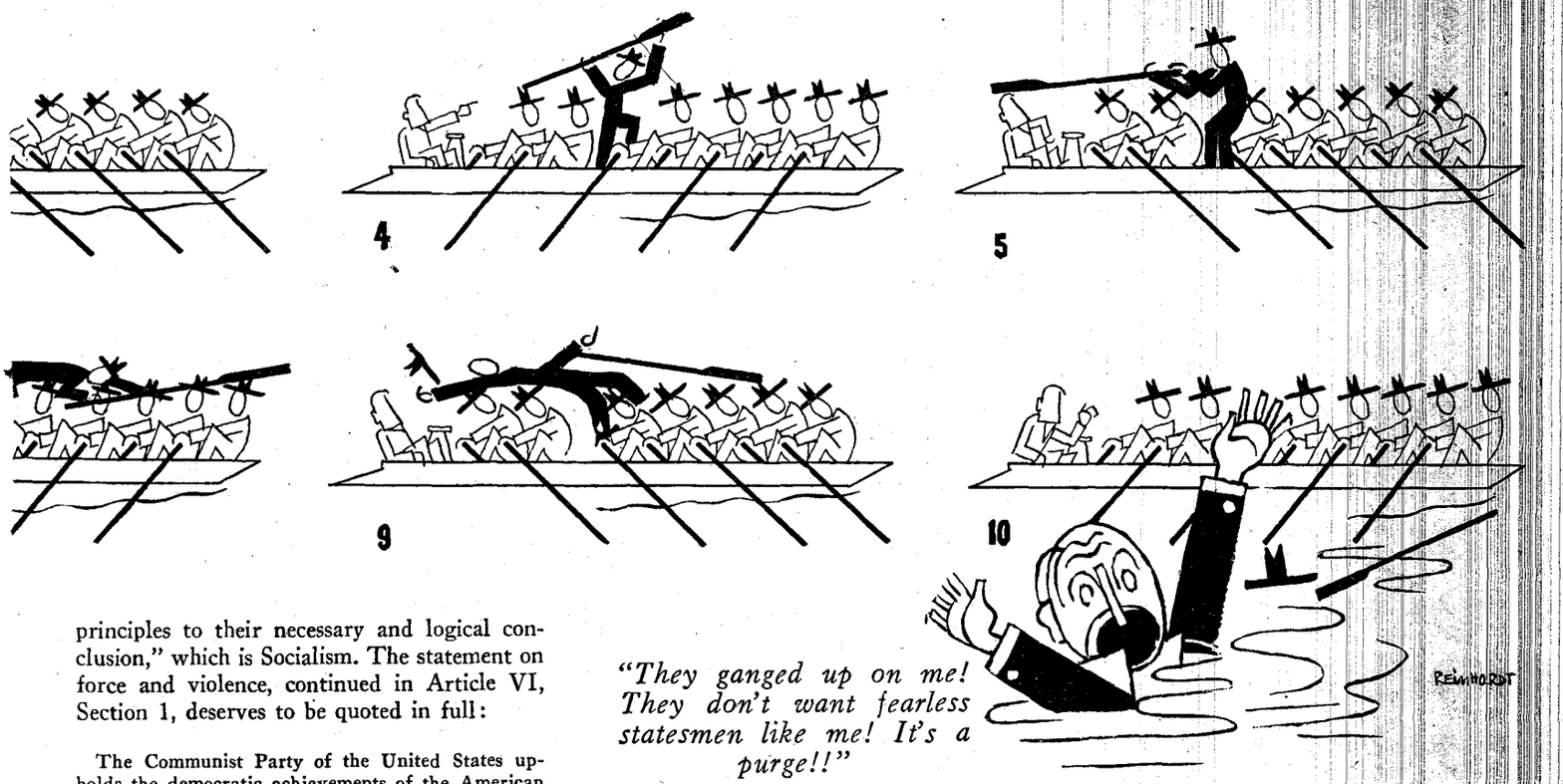

"They ganged up on me! They don't want fearless statesmen like me! It's a purge!!"

Reinhardt

principles to their necessary and logical conclusion," which is Socialism. The statement on force and violence, continued in Article VI, Section 1, deserves to be quoted in full:

> The Communist Party of the United States upholds the democratic achievements of the American people. It opposes with all its power any clique, group, circle, faction, or party, which conspires or acts to subvert, undermine, weaken, or overthrow any or all institutions of American democracy whereby the majority of the American people have obtained power to determine their own destiny in any degree. The Communist Party of the United States, standing unqualifiedly for the right of the majority to direct the destinies of our country, will fight with all its strength against any and every effort, whether it comes from abroad or from within, to impose upon our people the arbitrary will of any selfish minority group or party or clique or conspiracy.

It was in that spirit, the spirit of the defense of democracy and culture against fascist barbarism and violence that the Communist convention met. For me that convention represented both culmination and beginning. When I joined the Communist Party, Calvin Coolidge was President of the United States. The party was a little sect of about seven thousand members, torn by factionalism, isolated from the mainstream of American life. The world of Coolidge and Hoover has gone down the sluice of history, never to return. These have been years of suffering and heartache and groping for the American working class and the people as a whole. But they have been years that have taught much, too, and out of them have come growing strength and clarity and understanding. And out of them has emerged a new Communist Party, forged in the American class struggle, facing with clear eye the job that needs to be done.

Stalin has said that the most valuable capital is people. There, at the convention of the Communist Party I saw the most precious capital that our country possesses. And I was proud to be a Communist, to be the comrade of those 776 men and women out of the treasure-house that is America. You have seen their faces. And you have known and will know their deeds. They are rooted in the people, and the strength they give is assurance that the tree of Socialism will yet be green.

LIBERTY LEAGUE MEDICOS

It is unfortunate that the tremendous resistance to the socialization of health care has continued unabated. A small minority, consisting of the so-called "bourbons" or "economic royalists" of medicine and dentistry, many of whom occupy strategic positions of leadership in these professions, have left no stone unturned to obstruct this normal development. In their desire to protect what they believe are their threatened vested interests, they go to unbelievable lengths to maintain the status quo of medical and dental practice. They bring up all kinds of bugaboos, and prattle about regimentation, the curb on free choice of doctors, lack of incentive and initiative. They ignore completely the creative urge in the human species which accounts for nearly all that is worthwhile in life and for which we can be truly grateful. They orate volubly on the threat to the prevailing level of professional skill and the prohibitive expense to taxpayers, and with faces plethoric with emotion they climax their anti-social-mindedness by calling socialization, which history reveals is definitely endemic of this country, a foreign idea. It may be conceded that socialized services in an economic system dominated by the profit motive, tend to develop into bureaucracies and become infiltrated with politics and graft. The forces of opposition have been projecting the argument until it has grown thin with use that the same is likely to happen to a socialized system of health care. In doing so they refuse to acknowledge the fact that no progressive individual would even think of having any of the existing socialized services, with their admitted faults—and there are many of them—revert to their former status of private ownership.

These reactionaries cause no end of trouble and confusion by creating doubt and distrust of all advocates of change and reform. Those of their fellow practitioners who refuse to play along with them they try to discredit by branding them "Reds" and Communists. To date, all their endeavors have been of little or no avail. The socialization of health service has been gathering momentum steadily for the last 150 years, until it now exists here in greater part, as an accomplished fact. But unfortunately, they have succeeded in preventing the normal development of this service. The powerful and prolonged opposition to the improvement in the distribution of medical and dental care to meet the requirements of a rapidly changing society has created a type of socialized health care, which, if not actually monstrous, is certainly more than queer. In no other socialized service except that of health, is it expected or considered proper and just that those who render it should do so for inadequate, and only too frequently, no remuneration. Throughout the country we have physicians and dentists ranging from recent graduates to those of many years' practice, both general practitioners and specialists, who work in clinics, hospitals, schools, and even in their own offices on this unfair, incomprehensible basis.—Dental Outlook.

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BIG AS THE WORLD

Intimidation and Terror in Florida

JAKE MARTIN

"WHAT is this thing you belong to, Joe?" asked the Fort Lauderdale jailer. He had known Joe as a "good nigger" for fifteen years.

Joe, Negro Communist, sat in the cell with a dozen comrades. The police had raided their unit meeting and hung a familiar Florida charge of "vagrancy" on all of them.

"Why you ask, captain?" said Joe.

"The sheriff has got messages of protest from all over," exclaimed the jailer. "What you belong to must be as big as the whole world!"

Deputy Sheriff Bob Clark called Joe to the visiting room. "Here's your wife, Joe—she's got the $21.05 it takes to pay your fine. All you got to do is plead guilty now, and you can get out of here."

Joe kissed his wife, squeezed her extra hard. "I'm not leavin'!" he said to the deputy.

"You must like it here," sneered the deputy.

"I don't like sleepin' on steel slats, when I could be home in bed with my wife—"

"Pay your fine, Joe, and go on home. You ain't done nothin'."

"If I ain't done nothin', why am I here?" asked Joe. "No, suh. I'm gonna stay right here and *wear* this jail out!"

The deputy looked at Joe's wife. "Did you ever see such a crazy, goddam bunch of niggers!"

For two weeks Sheriff Walter Clark, of Broward County, worked on the Negro Communists to get them to plead guilty to "vagrancy." All were employed when arrested. The Negroes stood firm by the International Labor Defense—like "balls of steel." In desperation, the sheriff and his deputies beat up the youngest prisoner, seventeen-year-old David Butler, with their fists and with blackjacks, to get him to testify against his comrades. "Who do you want on your side, David?" asked the sheriff, after the beating—"*me* or the lawyer?"

David didn't reply.

"If you say the lawyer," said Sheriff Clark, "I'll kill you!"

"I want you on my side," said the boy.

In court the next day David refused the ILD attorney, W. Dow Woodward, and pleaded guilty. County Judge Anderson, greatly pleased, withheld sentence and released him. David went home and wrote this note to Woodward, which he left with friends:

Dear Lawyer: This is David Butler writing that the police and deputies made me say I don't want you to be my lawyer. They hit me with blackjacks, and Mr. Bob Clark told me to say things against the rest of us. I am leaving town so I won't have to do this. David Butler.

The courage of the Negroes was a tribute, too, to their white comrade and organizer, Rose Jackson, a resident of Fort Lauderdale. She is thirty-eight and a voluntary organizer for the Communist Party. The night the fifteen city and county Klan policemen burst into the shack in the Negro district, the unit meeting was just getting under way. She sat at a table, by a coal-oil lamp, pasting dues stamps in membership books. The officers rushed in, waving pistols. "Don't move," ordered Deputy Bob Clark, "or we'll shoot! Everybody put up their hands!"

"Comrades, don't be afraid!" shouted Rose. "Keep calm! Stand on your constitutional rights!"

"You'll find you haven't got any rights down here," snapped Deputy Sheriff Clark, and made a move for Rose.

"If you want another Tampa case out of this," Rose told him, "we'll give it to you."

She referred, of course, to the public indignation aroused over the murder of Joseph Shoemaker by the Tampa Ku Klux police.

"Take their knives and pistols!" Deputy Clark ordered his men. "Search the next room for guns!"

"There are no guns here," said Rose. "This is not a meeting of the Ku Klux Klan. Don't plant a gun in there, either!"

"Shut up, white woman! You've got too much mouth!" Deputy Clark reached to pick up some pamphlets on the table: *The Reds in Dixie*. Then he started to scoop up some money from the table. Rose brought her fist down on his hand with a bang. "That's our money," she said.

Clark, long a terrorist among the Negroes, counted the money while everybody looked on. There was $2.30.

"Hook that gal up to a nice black nigger," said one of the deputies, as the handcuffs came out.

They handcuffed Rose to a Negro and she led the procession of prisoners. The officers started them off toward the palmettos—the country. Rose stopped. "We demand to know where you are taking us and what you are going to do!"

The police held a conference and decided to head the prisoners in the opposite direction—through the Negro district and down the main street of Fort Lauderdale, to jail. There were four Negro women, sixteen Negro men, and two whites. The other white person was Arthur Jackson, Rose's husband. Rose stopped the parade again in front of the Postal Telegraph office and asked permission to send telegrams to President Roosevelt and Earl Browder. Deputy Sheriff Clark refused.

Sheriff Walter Clark, brother of Deputy Bob, gave Rose a private lecture when she got to the jail. "Don't you know," he said, "we don't allow these niggers to organize into anything except churches? You ought to be ashamed of yourself, associating with niggers at night. Don't you know most of these niggers can't read or write?"

At three a.m. the deputies took from his cell Bob Davis, the Negro in whose house the meeting had been held, and beat him mercilessly.

After a few days the county officials released Rose and Arthur Jackson without charges. This was a move to isolate the Negroes. Rose returned to the jail with food and gifts for the prisoners and messages of congratulation from the Communist Party. "When I'm in jail," said a Negro sharecropper, "I know I'm on the right road."

Rose put out leaflets all over Fort Lauderdale calling upon citizens to protest against the illegal raids. She was soon back in jail, on a charge of "vagrancy," with bond at $250.

The Fort Lauderdale press printed a false oath allegedly taken by members of the Communist Party, and in general tried to justify the illegal action of the police officials. At the preliminary trial, which was finally held, thirty American Legionnaires appeared in the crowded courtroom, wearing their Legion caps. This was the procedure, it will be remembered, when the Browder election-campaign meeting was broken up in Tampa in 1936.

Outside the courthouse a threatening crowd gathered when the court recessed at noon. THE ONLY ISM WE WILL TOLERATE IN FORT LAUDERDALE IS AMERICANISM read a large banner on a car parked in front of the courthouse. Rose called the attention of Dow Woodward to the banner. A hard-boiled Klansman warned them: "You'll see more than that tonight!"

Woodward had a prize chow-dog in his automobile. He took advantage of the recess to take the dog to a place of safety and returned to defend his clients. The atmosphere in the courtroom was so menacing that friends feared for the lives of the defendants. But they all took the stand and testified with confidence. One of the firmest witnesses was the prisoner who was not only a Communist but a Negro minister.

This kind of spirit, the expert legal defense, and the pressure that came from progressives throughout Florida and the country won the day. The state beat an unwilling retreat, dismissed the "vagrancy" charges, freed the defendants, and paid the costs of the trials. Fort Lauderdale, built in 1837 as a real fort in the

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campaigns against the Seminole Indians, had become a new kind of fort. Now the fight was for the constitutional rights of the Negro people. Americans, white and black, had united to fight for this right, against the oppression of the Southern landlords and their major-domos, who for generations have used the "vagrancy" statutes to railroad white and black workers to long jail terms and the chain gangs.

Fort Lauderdale is now a commercial and winter-resort city of fifteen thousand population. There may be as many as two thousand Negroes, who live in wooden shacks, on streets ankle-deep with dust. They live as sharecroppers, agricultural and domestic workers, and a number are longshoremen. They know what it means to work in the bean and tomato fields from dawn to dark—"from can't see to can't see"—for fifty-five cents, with twenty-five cents taken out for transportation. Sometimes all day in the hot sun without a water boy.

At tomato or bean-picking, the police in places like Fort Lauderdale and Miami raid the Negro section to make sure that the planters have plenty of cheap labor. The Negroes can pick tomatoes or beans for a dollar a day at the most, or go to jail for "vagrancy."

Of course, not all the population of Miami and Fort Lauderdale, twenty-six miles north, have to get along on fifty cents or a dollar a day. There are many pleasure yachts in the harbor of New River, Fort Lauderdale, for instance, but they don't belong to the workers. A few people make lots of money out of the biggest industry in Southeastern Florida: gambling. The largest open gambling house in Florida this past season was operated in Broward County under the sponsorship of Sheriff Walter Clark. It is the notorious "Plantation" and is still going strong. Sheriff Clark never heard about the Plantation, but he did hear about the Communist unit-meetings in the Negro section of Fort Lauderdale.

To conclude on a bizarre note—the officials have now ordered a county grand-jury investigation of "exploitation of the Negro race." The investigation will include only "exploitation" by Communists.

DEFENSE FOR THE COUNSEL

The Need for the National Lawyers Guild

CHARLES RECHT

PROBABLY every lawyer has an uneasy feeling that with the mass of his fellow-citizens he is not a very popular figure. The average man's conception of the American lawyer is that he is essentially a profiteer on the trials, tribulations, and litigations of his client. In a competitive society the lawyer has often enough acted as the spearhead of predatory business enterprise, as the conservator of property and contractual rights and of the status quo in general. During the halcyon days of the relatively healthy period of capitalism, the conservative and even reactionary role of the lawyer was generally taken for granted not only by the profession itself but by the public. Liberal ideas and ideals were deemed inconsistent with the interests of the profession and unbecoming in gentlemen of the bar. The notable exceptions in the last two decades were few. Many who were considered liberal lawyers were essentially philosophical anarchists of humanitarian instincts who defended the underdog not on the basis of well-defined political or social principles, but for the intellectual sport of the thing. There were a few who attached themselves to the early Socialist movement, but their progressive roles were played as leaders of the Socialist Party rather than as lawyers. One of these was a lawyer who, while at the head of a progressive movement, was in his professional capacity an attorney for not inconsiderable corporate interests.

The acid test of the progressive or reactionary character of the bar as a whole was the World War. Almost the entire bench and bar not only supported our role in that war, but showed the greatest eagerness in opposing every progressive trend and in disbarring, jailing, and ostracizing the handful of lawyers who opposed the profit-making war machine. In fact, until about 1930 a radical lawyer, or even a genuinely liberal lawyer, was an anomaly if not a contradiction in terms. The American Bar Association, and the state and local associations, were led by gentlemen who had achieved substantial financial as well as professional success. These leaders, often forming an almost self-perpetuating fraternity, rose to their prominence and position not because they had been exceptionally zealous in the defense of community and social welfare, public liberties, and personal rights, but because they were the retainers of large corporations in the field of industry and finance. Often their names were found as directors and officers of the largest business enterprises. The organized bar, until 1930, was the citadel of high conservatism and reaction, opposed in principle not only to radical measures but even to liberal, humanitarian legislation. One need only read the *Journal* of the American Bar Association and scan its resolutions. As recently as last year this body was steadfast in opposing the enactment of the Child Labor Amendment. The instance is cited not to prove that these men are heartless, but to show that these leaders of the bar represented, in the aggregate, the most conservative elements of American industry and finance, and hence would not support a measure which would adversely affect their clients. Of course, being highly articulate pillars of society in their respective communities, these apologists for the status quo cloaked their reactionary resolutions in a mantle of fine legal distinctions between the doctrines of centralization and states' rights. They have done so on other occasions, such as in the consideration of President Roosevelt's proposal to liberalize the Supreme Court.

Throughout the country, however, amid the smaller urban and rural population, there was a body of 175,000 lawyers for whom the existing bar associations presumed to speak, but who were in fact not represented by these organizations. The public failed to realize that these average lawyers were in the main not members of the American Bar Association, the state associations, and often even of the local county organizations, because the struggle for their daily bread prevented them from

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THE PEOPLE OF ORCHARD STREET

We don't know whether to move or stay
(Beside the pushcarts of Orchard Street),
But the crowds are passing and we must go
Southward along with them, the sharp
Taste of the shops upon our tongue—
Because their odors are so perpetual.
And when we glance above us at the sky
It is only the many faces that we see:
Leaning out of windows, they appear
So many faded moons. And darkly if
We think those moons above us there
And all the acrid odors of the street
Are but the camouflage to hide
Us from the sun, and no life is
But that which has been tainted by
Our sorrow and defeat, let any who
Would laugh at us as soon provide
A loophole for our telescopes to see
The front of a richer morning and we
Will bring that dawn into our day
And wear it flashing upon bayonet—
Tearing this darkness once for all,
Bringing our hearts out of this grave.

NORMAN MACLEOD.

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participating in associations which, they perceived, did not represent their interests and did not concern themselves with their problems. While accurate statistics are not available, the following figures are significant. The 1930 census showed that there were in the United States 160,605 lawyers and judges. In 1937 the total membership of the American Bar Association was 28,708, while the New York State Bar Association reported a membership of 4,899 and the Bar Association of the City of New York a membership of 3,775. The New York County Lawyers Association's membership totaled 4,899 in 1937. It must be borne in mind that the membership in all these associations is in large measure a duplicate membership. For instance, it is almost a certainty that a large proportion of the members of the Bar Association of the City of New York are also members of the New York County Lawyers Association, of the New York State Bar Association, and of the American Bar Association. Taking the country as a whole, the estimate that 70 percent of the American lawyers do not belong to any bar association is probably a conservative one.

Until the great depression, the common standard among lawyers was said to be illustrated by the saying that a lawyer must first get on, then get honor, and then get honest; but principally, he must get on.

The depression has not only given the large body of the bar a degree of social consciousness but is now imparting the knowledge that unless the lawyer becomes a part of an organized body he is helpless to affect the political and economic trends of our times. One need not here rehearse the economic plight of the young attorney. It has been given some degree of publicity. The economic survey of the New York County Lawyers Association indicated that in New York City one-third of the lawyers earned less than $750 a year, that many are on WPA projects, and each year brings a greater number to the already overcrowded profession. The questioning and unrest among the rank and file of the bar existed prior to the depression, but the development of the crisis brought it to a climax. The first organized expression of this unrest was embodied in the creation, in February 1937, of a new organization, the National Lawyers Guild.

While the guild and its chapters have committees for the improvement of the economic status of the lawyer, the guild does not proceed on the narrow principle of self-interest but is dedicated to the purposes stated in the preamble of its constitution.* It is clear that this organization could not have grown in one year to a membership of 3,700 nationally unless its aims appealed to many lawyers, especially the younger men, who look to the progressive character of the organization as a means of improving their individual condition through social and political measures benefiting the whole stratum within which they function, the lower middle-class and the working class.

When the formation of a progressive lawyers-association was first discussed at a luncheon conference, there were present Heywood Broun of the American Newspaper Guild, Frank Gillmore of Actors Equity Association, and three lawyers. Broun and Gillmore agreed that it had been at first difficult to organize actors and newspaper men into labor unions, because the ladies and gentlemen of these professions had considered themselves a class outside the ranks of the laboring masses. Broun stated that the lawyers would probably also act, in the beginning, as prima donnas. Whereupon one of the lawyers said that the difficulty was a lack of sanction behind any organized effort by lawyers; that if newspaper men or actors went on strike the community, which considered these people's activity important, was bound to react and probably with sympathy. Whereas if the lawyers in New York went on strike the city would probably declare a public holiday. These initial discussions ultimately crystallized into the essential principle now embodied in the preamble. Lawyers, in organizing for the public welfare and the defense of human rights, must of necessity become to a greater degree than other professional groups the leaders of progressive forces, because they know that the improvement of their condition depends upon social security and the extension of democracy in general. Nor is it inconsistent with the traditions of the advocate to become a tribune of the plebs. It was only the American frontier philosophy which gave him temporarily the role of conservator of vested rights and property.

The call to the first convention of the National Lawyers Guild was answered largely by the younger generation of the bar, but among the older progressives were to be found such names as John P. Devaney, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Minnesota, Gov. Elmer Benson of Minnesota, Gov. Philip La Follette of Wisconsin, Congressman Maury Maverick of Texas, and many others. From a small nucleus the organization grew, within one year, to a membership of 3,700 which is constantly increasing.

At the second national convention, February 1938, Justice Ferdinand Pecora of the New York State Supreme Court, was elected president. At a dinner tendered him by the New York chapter of the guild, Justice Pecora stated:

> First and foremost, the National Lawyers Guild proposes to bring together in one great association lawyers who are prepared to subordinate the selfish interests of anti-social groups in the community even be they prospective clients, and who will work for the broader interests of the great body politic which is America. It is that type of lawyer whom we want as a member of our guild. . . .

Disheartened by the character of the old bar associations, which often function chiefly through a dinner committee and a disbarment committee, some lawyer might look skeptically upon the guild, wondering whether, after its membership has risen to that of the American Bar Association, the guild will not lose its youthful spirit and grow into an instrument for standpatism and preservation of the status quo. But as long as the membership of the guild remains on its present economic and social level, there is little fear that such a fate will overtake it, particularly since it differs essentially from the old associations by reason of its democratic internal organization, guaranteeing permanent rank-and-file control over policy.

The guild reflects the new spirit manifest in the legal profession. One need only cite a unique situation in the annals of the organized bar. There was recently instituted an "investigation," in preparation for disbarment proceedings, into the conduct of Edward Lamb, an attorney for the CIO in Ohio, charging him with unprofessional conduct involving moral turpitude and misconduct in office. The proceedings against Mr. Lamb were inspired by the judge who had granted a sweeping injunction against strike activities of the CIO, and arose out of a heated argument between the judge and Mr. Lamb during the trial. While the old conservative bar associations would, as in the past, have given their blessing to this effort to disbar a fearless lawyer, the guild formed a committee of its own to go into the charges, and not only exonerated Mr. Lamb of misconduct and the charge of moral turpitude, but the national committee formed by the guild has agreed to act in his defense.

In Chicago a guild committee assisted in the investigation to establish the facts concerning the Memorial Day massacre. In Boston the guild chapter publicized the facts concerning the Lewiston Shoe strike situation and the denial of labor's rights.

The New York chapter of the guild and the national executive committee made a full study of the neutrality policy of the United States government and sent to the State Department a delegation headed by Paul Kern, which insisted on actual repeal of the Neutrality Act, because its operation has been to the advantage of the fascists and in detriment to the democratic states at war.

For the brief span of its existence, the accomplishments of the guild are formidable. To detail them comprehensively would be to demonstrate that wherever the rights of labor and progressive measures are in danger, the Na-

*Recent and developing social and economic changes are profoundly disturbing our nation and make new legal attitudes imperative. The legal profession must necessarily play an important role in shaping our changing legal structure. Having in mind these conditions and responsibilities, the National Lawyers Guild aims to unite the lawyers of America in a professional organization which shall function as an effective social force in the service of the people to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property rights. This organization aims to bring together all lawyers who regard adjustment to new conditions as more important than the veneration of precedent, who recognize the importance of safeguarding and extending the rights of workers and farmers upon whom the welfare of the entire nation depends, of maintaining our civil rights and liberties and our democratic institutions, and who look upon the law as a living and flexible instrument which must be adapted to the needs of the people.

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tional Lawyers Guild has organized a body of lawyers to come to their defense.

With the growth of the American Labor Party in New York, and kindred progressive movements throughout the United States, the lawyers, who in many of the smaller communities are the nerve centers of political activities, will be an invaluable aid in galvanizing the latent liberal elements of the country into a political force. The National Lawyers Guild can and will form one of the most important adjuncts to a progressive movement representing the interests of the workers and farmers.

RETURN TO SILENCE

A RECENT issue of the *Guild Reporter* lists some of the boners and cracks made by publishers sitting across the bargaining table from Newspaper Guild spokesmen. The classic is one which ranks with the Massachusetts State Senator's famous challenge to the "boogawahzies." This publisher had kept silent during several months of negotiations; he had not spoken once. At last his big moment arrived. He rose to his feet with a sheaf of papers in hand—letters, postcards, and what-not—and warned the conference stenographer to prepare herself for "a statement for the record." He was about to ask a question, he said, turning to the guild committee, but the committee needn't answer if the answer was going to be embarrassing. The publisher spoke.

"I have here," said he, shuffling through the papers and snagging one, "a letter from the secretary of your local guild. In the lower left-hand corner are typed the symbols 'BS&AU' followed by a row of figures."

Some more shuffling and a postcard was brought into view. "This," he said, "is a communication to our city editor from the American League for Peace and Democracy. In the lower left-hand corner are the symbols 'BS&AU' followed by a row of figures."

The next thing out of the batch was a piece of publicity, sent by some left-wing organization. The publisher continued, for the record, "In the lower left-hand corner . . ." the same symbols and a set of figures.

There was another and another. Then his droning voice became crisp, in the best manner of courtroom cross-examination.

"Now I ask the gentlemen of the guild, for the record—and they need not answer if the answer will prove embarrassing to them—What is BS&AU 13649?"

The guild reports its representatives manfully refrained from crying out, "You dope, that's the private telephone number for the Kremlin in Moscow!" The committee merely explained that the symbols indicated the communications were typed by members of the Bookkeepers, Stenographers, and Accountants Union, and that the figures identified the local union. The publisher returned to his silence.

Readers' Forum

Labor's Prisoners

TO NEW MASSES: I know that your space is very limited. But I am sure that you will let us have a little of it to remind your readers that the fourth annual Summer Milk Fund Drive for the boys and girls whose fathers are in jail for labor is under way.

These children—labor's neediest—have always received the generous support of the readers of NEW MASSES and this year they need it more badly than they ever did in the past. There are eight hundred of them throughout the country, depending on us, their friends on the outside, to help keep them well and strong until their dads, serving sentences from six months to life, are free to come home to them once more.

Since the beginning of this year alone our long-term prisoners' relief-rolls have been increased by 24 percent. Our fund must be ready to take care of all who run to us for aid. That's why the goal for the 1938 Milk Drive is $6,000 before September 1. That's a minimum budget, the absolute rock-bottom of what we must raise. Those kids need our assistance, and by helping take care of them we are lifting one of the heaviest burdens their fathers have to bear behind prison walls—the torturing thought that their loved ones are facing misery and poverty and that they can do nothing to aid them.

Labor's prisoners and their families need a brotherly helping hand and we know that we can count on your readers to extend it to them.

VITO MARCANTONIO.
National President,
International Labor Defense.

New York City.

More on Chernov

TO NEW MASSES: As a one-time staff member of the Moscow *Daily News*, and one having had to do with the investigation of bureaucratic obstruction where it involved efforts of American specialists to accomplish their assigned tasks efficiently, let me congratulate NEW MASSES on its recent publication of the article by Mr. John Sutton describing his difficulties with the Commissariat of Agriculture, under the headship of Chernov, since proven guilty of anti-Soviet wrecking.

I do not think it was a secret among American specialists, particularly in agriculture, that somewhere deliberate efforts were afoot to checkmate their efforts to reconstruct Soviet agriculture. I especially recall the do-or-die battle put up by one American poultry-breeding expert whose troubles were referred to my investigation. Setting himself the task of modernizing poultry-breeding methods, he found himself the center of a concerted attack by various officials who made it well nigh impossible for him to continue.

It required the better part of eighteen months to succeed in eliminating the state poultry-farm director who subsequently, I found, was promoted to other work within the agricultural commissariat. Only when the Soviet Control Commission finally took a hand in the matter was the trouble remedied—but by then the specialist himself had lost heart, and taken leave. Some of the obstructionist tactics employed were of a kind that left one with no other alternative but to conclude that sabotage—on a rather large scale—was being conducted, with direct connivance of officials in the Commissariat.

Or take the deliberate sabotage, directed by Chernov, against the agricultural colony launched by a group of Americans at Bavlenny, near Moscow, where official cooperation, strategically withheld, resulted in temporary demoralization. Small wonder that the subsequent arrests of officials in the Commissariat of Agriculture produced the immediate effect of heartening and encouraging such long-suffering pioneer groups.

I have spent three years in the study and investigation of such cases of outright bureaucracy as described by Mr. Sutton. It was bureaucracy due, not to structural flaws within the Commissariat, but, as most of us then suspected, to deliberate attempts on the part of concealed enemies of the Soviet government. The recent trials were in the nature of a confirmation of the suspicions entertained at the time, and showed the correctness of the feelings then prevailing among the specialists concerned. I could mention many cases similar to that of Mr. Sutton. I am sure that to those American specialists who at one time or another had anything to do with the Commissariat of Agriculture, nothing appeared less surprising than that Chernov should have been placed on trial and condemned to face the consequences of his anti-government activities.

ED FALKOWSKI.

Mena, Ark.
Commonwealth College.

In Defense of Isaacs

TO NEW MASSES: Whatever the outcome of the Gerson affair may be, the one thing that stands out in bold relief is that Stanley M. Isaacs, Manhattan Borough President, is a man of unflinching courage, honesty, and determination.

But, it may be argued, the public resents Gerson's appointment because Communism is opposed by the large majority of our citizens. But so are fascism and Nazism, and yet I venture the assertion that many fascists and Nazis are holding public office. Furthermore, the Communist Party is a legally constituted party. No such legal status can be claimed for the fascists.

But every fascist and Nazi movement started with the avowed aim and object of ridding the world from the dread plague, Communism. In the process of accomplishing their noble purpose, the fascists and the Nazis murder, imprison, and exile their opponents, send them to concentration camps, burn the best literature, suppress freedom of speech, press, and assembly, wage undeclared war against helpless and defenseless peoples, and menace world civilization.

How to nip in the bud this incipient fascism, domestic and foreign, is the concern of all peace-loving people. On this issue there can be no conflict, no dispute. Conservatives and radicals alike must join forces to halt and destroy fascism. Borough President Isaacs suggests the way. In his testimony before the McNaboe committee, he states: "I am not going to defend Communism; I don't agree with Communism; I hold opposite views, as you well know. But I do defend the right of a Communist to hold office."

Mr. Isaacs displayed a profound understanding of this phase of the problem when he stated that "Communism is opposed to capitalism, but Communists are loyal to democracy as the best way to halt fascism," citing as examples Spain and China.

In the days to come, the public will pay its respects to Stanley M. Isaacs as an honest and courageous public servant who bravely defied public clamor and fought for the rights of a man with whose principles he disagreed.

ARTHUR STEWART.

New York City.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

History and Fiction

A DISCERNING Victorian critic once observed that historical novels are mortal enemies to history, and with Leslie Stephen we are often tempted to add that they are mortal enemies to fiction. Our impatience with historical fiction has been heightened by the shabby purposes which it has served. Dazed by an uncongenial world, novelists have frequently retreated to a romanticized past. It is significant that the target for Mike Gold's well-aimed attack on the literature of escape some years ago was Thornton Wilder, who had written, in the midst of a world crisis, romantic novels about eighteenth-century Peru and the isles of ancient Greece. Besides opening the most convenient avenues of escape from contemporary difficulties, the historical novel has favored the development of cheap and sensational adventure stories. *Scaramouche* and *Anthony Adverse* are perennial variations on an apparently inexhaustible theme. When you throw into the balance such sentimental falsifications as Stark Young's *So Red the Rose* and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind,* you are driven to conclude that the historical novel is at best a dubious blessing.

But it would be a mistake to dismiss this *genre* as a fairly contemptible offspring of the Waverley tradition. We may find fault with the novelists who have bungled the historical theme. We may remind ourselves that the historical romancers plagued American fiction before the war. Let us at least place the blame where it belongs: not on the subject, but on the treatment and point of view. There is no *a priori* reason why a novel about Shays' Rebellion should be inferior to a novel about the Akron rubber strike. From the *Odyssey* to *John Brown's Body,* the historical subject has been the natural theme of epic poetry. Shakespeare's tragedies are historical. Tolstoy's *War and Peace,* like Hardy's *The Dynasts,* was a reconstruction of the Napoleonic era. Hawthorne's study of the Puritan mind in *The Scarlet Letter* and Stephen Crane's Civil War portraits in *The Red Badge of Courage* were significant contributions to fiction as well as to our understanding of American life. It does not follow, of course, that history is the "best" subject for literary art. Such a category would be as absurd as our half-conscious suspicion that the past can furnish only the "worst" subject.

I cannot believe that it is merely a coincidence that so many of the novels on the best-seller lists of the last two years have been historical novels. *Northwest Passage, Drums Along the Mohawk, Gone With the Wind, Action at Aquila*—these are interesting symptoms that deserve attention. The popularity of such books cannot be accounted for entirely in terms of escape, adventure, and romance, though these elements are abundantly present. All these novels deal with American history, and this fact, I suspect, is a powerful reason for the great interest which they have aroused. There is a curiosity about the national past which is more widespread than one might offhand suppose. There is a deepening contradiction between what people learned in their grade-school texts and what they read in the morning newspaper. It is not chauvinism but confusion which now drives the reader to the past. The popular novel, to be sure, deepens the confusion by encouraging the patriotic impulse to soar with the screeching eagle and by nourishing the illusion that the past was at once a friendlier and more glorious time. Margaret Mitchell's distorted version of the plantation society has done a serious injustice to the Negro people. But readers have devoured her book as "history." She manipulated public taste for shoddy ends, but the point is that the interest in historical fiction is widespread. More than that, it is a reflection of a curiosity about our past which can be directed toward more fruitful purposes.

There is an increasing appeal to history by different schools of political thought. With the heightening of social tension, political groups with diametrically opposed objectives claim the sanction of American tradition. The fascists, as Dimitrov pointed out three years ago, "are rummaging through the entire history of every nation" in an effort to "bamboozle the masses." The bigwigs of the Republican Party make hypocritical appeals to the founding fathers in support of their anti-democratic drives. In a recent book on *The End of Democracy,* the reactionary Ralph Adams Cram wrote: "I apologize to the revered memory of Washington, Adams, Madison, Gerry,

Stanley DeGraff

and all their fellows for attributing to them any intellectual commerce with democracy, for if they feared anything it was precisely this; whereby their prevision was highly justified." The advocates of democracy, on the other hand, with the objective record of history on their side, have concentrated on reminding the people that to relinquish democracy is to relinquish the essence of the American heritage. Earl Browder, as spokesman for the Communist Party, has taken the leadership in the revival and enrichment of this heritage.

We are becoming more and more conscious of history as an organic part of the experience of the present. We live in an era of vast culminations and vast beginnings. The dimensions of our understanding encompass the past and the future, and we are as concerned about the origins of our destiny as we are about its direction. European writers are ahead of us in recognizing the implications of the historical-mindedness of their contemporaries. For them the historical theme is no longer remote from the immediate pressure of events, but an invigorating source of drama and insight. Jean Cassou's *Lacerated Paris* (dealing with the struggles of the Communards) and Gustav Regler's *Sowing* (whose hero is a fifteenth-century peasant leader) have been hailed on the Continent as valuable contributions to the literature of the people's front. The work of Lion Feuchtwanger, Heinrich Mann, and Sylvia Townsend Warner is more familiar to American readers. Mr. C. Day Lewis has called our attention to the successful left-wing novel by Jack Lindsay, *1649.* The fact that a recent issue of *International Literature* was devoted almost entirely to historical fiction and a discussion of the role and treatment of history in literature, is an indication that Soviet writers regard this as one of the most pertinent questions in current criticism.

In America, the writers of the left have only begun to explore the rich possibilities opened up by a Marxist revaluation of our history. For studies like James Allen's on the Reconstruction period, for popular biographies like Alan Calmer's on Albert Parsons, for editions like Richard Enmale's of Marx and Engels on the Civil War, for scholarly articles such as have appeared in *Science and Society,* we must be grateful. But in literature we have very little that corresponds to the dramatization of John Brown by Blankfort and Gold. And in fiction we have practically nothing that will represent for truth what *Gone With the Wind* represents for reaction.

Our heritage is too broad and too rich to

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be encompassed in technical treatises. It needs creative expression. The aspirations of the American people toward political and economic emancipation, culminating in two revolutions, giving rise to a powerful labor movement, providing scope for vigorous personalities, suggest vital themes for literature. Not all progressive writers will find it congenial to explore these historical themes, nor will all good writing in the next few years be based on them. But we may, plausibly, look forward to a reflection in literature of the growing consciousness of our backgrounds. This reflection need not be sensational. It need not be a radical counterpart to *Northwest Passage*. It can be realistic, thoughtful, dramatic. As in *Henry Esmond,* history can "pull off her periwig and cease to be Court-ridden." There is no reason why historical fiction, informed and imaginative, has to be either a boresome sermon or a jitterbug version of the college textbook. One thing is certain: if we fail to portray the truth, the twentieth-century Confederates will continue to dramatize their distorted perspectives—and with damaging effectiveness.

I am aware that this statement raises more problems than it seeks to answer. For example, the definition of "historical fiction" could be examined at some length. It might easily be argued that the characters need not be actual figures which can be verified by research. It may occur to some readers that every novel written from a Marxist point of view is "historical" in the sense that it is an artistic integration of real social forces. One should be extremely cautious to avoid mechanical parallels between past and present events. One should certainly not encourage the revival of "costume novels" in which the characters move pompously through dreary museums. I do not think that these difficulties are insurmountable. At least the subject is worth more consideration than it has received.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

The Career of Léon Blum

LÉON BLUM, MAN AND STATESMAN, *by Geoffrey Fraser and Thadée Natanson. J. B. Lippincott Co. $3.*

BEFORE the abortive fascist coup of Feb. 6, 1934, Léon Blum was only a name outside of France. Hardly anyone, except friends, or Socialists who met him at international congresses, knew anything about his life or his activities. The People's Front catapulted him into international prominence, and he has been made the subject of at least three biographies. The most recent one, now under review, is from the pen of two authors: one an adventurous journalist, the other a rich and close friend of Blum. Like the preceding biographies of the French Socialist leader, their study suffers from too much adulation of the man. The sections on the Socialist movement before and during the war are too brief and at times too confused to have any meaning for the American reader. The claims of the authors notwithstanding, a definitive life of Léon Blum, not to say a more critical one, still remains to be done.

Blum, like many leaders in the French Socialist movement, stemmed from a bourgeois family. From a brilliant, witty, cheeky, almost effeminate dandy who might have developed into a dancing master or libertine, he grew into a recognized literary critic at the age of twenty-two, who was a welcome guest in the Parisian salons where he rubbed shoulders with Anatole France and with such virtuosos in literature as André Gide and Marcel Proust. In the meantime, Blum was being gently led to Marx by Lucien Herr of the École Normale, who had played such a crucial role in the lives of many rich young men. This Socialist education was reenforced by contact with Jean Jaurès whom Blum had met during the Dreyfus affair. He became a member of the Unified Socialist Party.

Snow

"There is no such thing as unreasonable profits—if the risk is great enough."—LAMMOT DU PONT.

But it was not until after the War that Léon Blum rose to first rank in the Socialist movement. Jaurès was dead, the victim of a crazed chauvinist's bullet; and Guesde, the pioneer of Marxism in France, was on his death bed. The revolutionary vigor of the party had been absorbed by the Third International to which the vast majority of the French Socialist Party voted to adhere at the Congress of Tours. Blum became the leader of the reformist minority whose program he was instrumental in formulating and whose party organ he later edited.

Blum is the best possible spokesman for the post-war French Socialist Party. He is more the parliamentarian than the mass orator. Despite the authors' assertions to the contrary, Blum lacks the warmth, the passion, the poetic power, and the revolutionary élan which move the masses. He appears cold, aristocratic. He is a hair splitter, and appeals essentially to intellectuals. He evokes admiration, but not love. Blum is a legalist. Like his friends, the leaders of the British Labor Party, he contends that fascism can be stopped and Socialism achieved by act of parliament, that the new social order can glide in like a ferry-boat into its dock.

The People's Front was born from the spontaneous rising of the French workers, led by the proletarian parties, against the fascist threat. The present reviewer lived through the tense, revolutionary days that followed the attempted fascist coup on the night of Feb. 6, 1934. He witnessed the workers' struggles against the armed forces of the state, the general strike and the monster demonstration of Feb. 12 when party walls broke down and when hundreds of thousands, facing a red flag that had been hoisted on the statue on the Place de la Nation, stood with clenched fists and intoned Pottier's stirring words of the *International,* written in the blood of the Communards. The French masses proclaimed to the entire world that "fascism will not pass." Two years later the People's Front won a decisive electoral victory, after having drawn into its orbit a large fraction of the petty-bourgeois following of the Radical Socialists, and swept into power the first Blum government.

Did Blum carry out the mandate entrusted to him? No one will minimize the importance either of the labor reforms of his first government, or of the legislation for the protection of the petty-bourgeoisie. But we cannot exculpate Blum, as the present biographers do, from the suicidal blunder of having followed his Radical Socialist allies in the pusillanimous and treacherous non-intervention policy in Spain. By doing so he did not preserve peace, for peace is more menaced today than before his commitment to the fatal policy of non-intervention in Spain; rather has he

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unconsciously fed the arrogance of the fascist gangsters and of their acolytes, the Chamberlains, the Hoares, and the Lavals.

By capitulating on the Spanish question, Blum displayed a lack of political sagacity. It is now common knowledge that in the first Blum cabinet, the Radical Socialists threatened to resign unless the Spanish frontier was closed. Of course, it was a bluff and Blum might have seen through their duplicity. The masses were clamoring for aid to the Spanish loyalists. Their instinct told them that a fascist victory in Spain might mean civil war in France. In the face of the pressure from below the Radical Socialists were in no position to resign and to take responsibility for overthrowing the first People's Front government. Had the Socialist leader been firm, the Radicals would have yielded and the British conservatives would have had no other choice but to follow France, Britain's indispensable ally on the Continent.

But Blum was outmaneuvered. His surrender on non-intervention was at once an encouragement to the fascist powers to proceed with their plans in Spain and in Central Europe and a betrayal of the Spanish workers, martyrs of the international labor movement.

Fortunately, Blum's political blunder has neither disorganized nor paralyzed the French workers. They stood behind the People's Front government not because they sympathized with all of its policies, least of all with its Spanish policy, but because it symbolized the unity of the anti-fascist forces. They continue to support the People's Front without ceasing to be its motor and its vanguard.

SAMUEL BERNSTEIN.

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Two individual contributions are noteworthy. Mr. Bisson visited the Soviet territories of China a year later than Edgar Snow. He talked with Mao Tse-tung and other Communist leaders late last summer, when the united front was being established. He is

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able to quote their keen, sound observations on the present military and political events. Mr. Bisson also contributes eye-witness material from Manchuria, which he visited early this year. He noted the steady decrease of primary education, the complete destruction of all higher education, the increase of opium and heroin—all part of the Japanese policy of stupefying the Chinese population in order to induce them to bear the yoke. He talked with peasants of the "protected" villages and brought out a clear, convincing picture of this method which the invaders adopt to isolate the peasants from the patriot guerrilla-bands of Manchuria.

The clash at the Marco Polo Bridge which ushered in the present hostilities—and which most readers have forgotten—is given sixteen pages of the author's first chapter. Japanese and Chinese versions of the incident are given, followed by evidence from diplomatic exchanges and newspaper comment. Mr. Bisson examines past treaties as far back as the Boxer Rebellion to discover what claim, if any, the Japanese had to those night maneuvers at Lukouchiao. When he has finished piling up the details of those first few days of war, it is impossible to doubt that the Japanese were moving steadily towards conquest, and provoking "incidents" to that end.

After his first chapter on "The Outbreak of War," Mr. Bisson devotes several chapters to the events of the five preceding years in North China and in Japan. "The full extent of Japanese aggression during this period is little realized." As one reads the evidence, beginning with the Tangku truce of 1933, one is appalled by the cynical persistence of imperialist acquisition and at the supine attitude of all official Chinese. No wonder Japan came to believe there was nothing these patient people would not endure. Then, slowly at first, and finally with a great burst of momentum, we see the spirit of the Chinese people asserting itself, forcing the reluctant government to act.

There is inspiring material about the student demonstrations which spread from Peiping throughout China, in the teeth of both Japanese and official Chinese suppression. Even as they were mercilessly beaten by Chinese soldiers, students kept pleading with those soldiers until they aroused them to patriotic shame. There is also a comprehensive analysis of political events in Japan during the same period, showing how the power of the military grew towards its hour of attack in China, and estimating what strength the two sides have to continue the war.

The style is clear but undramatic. The reader himself must supply the sense of the momentous importance of events described. It is almost as if the author were deliberately playing down the popular appeal of some of his material. Interviews with Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung, for instance, creep rather incidentally into the pages as comments on the military situation, and only a footnote shows that the interview was given in person to the writer. Much of the time we move in a world

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of diplomatic documents rather than of people, and the outrages to which most space is given are violations of law and international precedent rather than of human lives. This restraint has its value and its drawback.

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This peasant of the "protected village," introduced so casually, or was it perhaps designedly, just at the end, to leave behind the human figure about whom the whole story is written—this man, so burdened with petty details, so buried under oppressions, has reached the end of his patience, now that his choice is either to live in such villages or to face death in battle. It is he who gives reality and importance to all the carefully heaped and studied documents, since his fate is the fate of China.

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orientation of the book indicates that to the author Marxism is a working philosophy that not only illumines his problems as a biologist, but guides him as an active participant in the basic social movements of his world.

The first part of the study deals with the biological basis of Marxism—"Has science shaken or strengthened this basis since the time of Marx and Engels?" Dialectical materialism rests on two broad generalizations concerning the nature of the universe: the existence and nature of change (dialectic) and the objective existence of the world independent of man's consciousness (materialism). In great measure, these are biological questions. Marx and Engels were fully cognizant of the state of biological science at the middle of the nineteenth century, and were keenly aware of its significance for their contentions as to the nature of reality. They hailed Darwin's *Origin of Species* upon its publication in 1859, immediately recognizing this work as epoch-making for biology, as powerful confirmation of their philosophical views. Professor Prenant in 1938 has the advantage of knowing all the biological research that has been accomplished since the turbulent days of the 1860's when both evolution and Marxism were beginning their struggles for acceptance. He brilliantly reviews our present knowledge of paleontology, mutations, and the animal origin of man to show incontrovertibly that the biological world is both dialectic and materialist. Without disparaging his work, we can, nevertheless, see that his job is one of filling in details. Marx and Engels, in the 1860's having relatively meager evidence, but possessing the correct method as well as prophetic insight, were able to penetrate to the core of Darwin's results and to outline the way in which they could be used to substantiate the fundamental tenets of dialectical materialism.

In the second part of his book Professor Prenant convincingly demonstrates the clarification and integration that result when such problems as adaptation, form, heredity, evolution, consciousness, and the relation between the biological and social sciences are analyzed from the point of view of materialist dialectics. Biologists will realize as they study each of these problems in *Biology and Marxism* that research would have been greatly accelerated and many lengthy controversies (e. g., preformation or epigenesis, evolution or heredity, abiogenesis or biogenesis) recognized as emptily verbalistic, had our great research predecessors applied Marxism to their investigations.

The author's examination of the problem of consciousness is especially enlightening. This, of course, is the most baffling enigma facing biologists, and many are the scientists that have turned in dismay from this difficulty only to end in mysticism. But Professor Prenant shows that the key to the elucidation of this mystery is essentially contained in Marx's famous statement: "By acting on the external world and changing it, man at the same time changes his own nature." The

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results of modern psychological research are brought into the discussion in elaboration of this profound observation, but again we see that this is a process of fitting in details. Indeed, so sharply does Marx's principle characterize the true nature of this problem, that contemporary psychologists interested in learning, volition, and thinking might well take his words as their motto.

Throughout the latter part of his book, the author again and again proves the inadequacy of not only the vitalistic, but also the mechanistic, concept of life. Many biologists who have accepted Marxism in general have been troubled by the refusal of rigorous dialectical materialists to adhere to the mechanistic concept. This, they think, exposes Marxists to the charge of vitalism, i. e., philosophic idealism. *Biology and Marxism* gives a most lucid and conclusive resolution of this seeming contradiction, and without in the least leaving the door open for vitalism. No biologist who has pondered the philosophical import of his science can fail to learn much from Professor Prenant's able dialectical discussion of this problem.

It seems trivial to point to some small inadequacies in such an excellent book. The discussion of cause and effect on pages 59-60, for example, is unclear and needs to be discussed at greater length. The distinction between physiology and biology made in this section seems artificial. And isn't there a teleogical color to the remark in the footnote on page 81? "Life, exactly as we know it, was thus implicit in cosmic evolution." But Professor Prenant himself gives us the cue to any of his shortcomings when he states, "If [this book] is bad, that is not because it is Marxian, but because it is not Marxian enough." He need have no fears, however, for, although there may be some questionable details, *Biology and Marxism* is a thoroughly Marxian book. And that is praise sufficient.

ROY POWELL.

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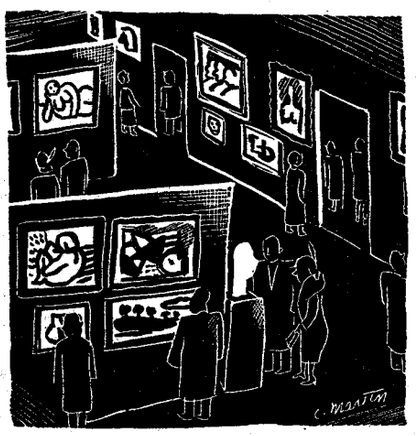
which are produced each year. Instead, she has written an epitaph for a way of life which could only have survived in Africa—a mode of thinking and feeling which was uprooted in Europe by the machine, and which was transplanted to Africa, there to linger on for a while and die.

The values which infuse this book at every point are the values of the *ancien régime,* the values of an aristocracy which the writer—who in real life is Baroness Blixen—was heir to by birth and breeding. The vast acres of her coffee farm, and the patriarchal relations which she maintained with the native squatters, provided the proper setting for a life which could encompass at opposite poles both lion-hunting and translations from the ancient Greek. Within such a framework, the stoic flexibility of the baroness in meeting the stresses of African experience was not far removed from the *poise* which is the aristocrat's cherished prerogative; and one result of this is the calm lucidity of her prose, which achieves its pastel effects almost purely by understatement. Again, her admiration for the fierce Masai tribe, who were once the greatest fighters in Africa, is conditioned by her sympathy for those who are sensitive to the great tragic moments of life. The haughty pride of the Masai warrior, who lives on nothing but milk and blood, was instantly apprehended and appreciated by the discriminating sensibility of the aristocrat.

What gives this book its peculiar distinction is the air of brooding sadness which the author imparts to her chronicle. It is significant that her two most intimate friends, Berkeley Cole and Denys Finch-Hatton, were, as she writes, "examples of atavism. . . . Theirs was an earlier England, a world which no longer existed." Like her, they had come to Africa to perpetuate that world; and the story of their death, along with her own inability to make the farm a success, testify to the ultimate failure of that world to maintain its values against the encroachments of the bourgeoisie. And the poignancy of her final farewell is all the more accentuated because the reader realizes that she too, like the Masai warrior, is the last remnant of a dying race.

JOSEPH FRANK.



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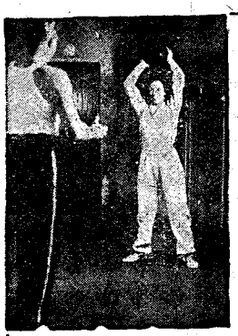

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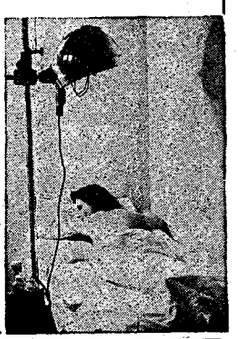

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MOVIES

A GRAND historical picture, without concessions to the trickery of the producing mind, has come to the 55th Street Playhouse, in *The Courier of Lyons,* latest vehicle of the French star, Pierre Blanchar. In 1796, the payroll of Napoleon's army invading Italy was stolen between Paris and Lyons. An innocent citizen, Joseph Lesurque, who bore an amazing resemblance to Dubosc, leader of the brigands, was convicted for the crime, after direct identification by secondary witnesses and the refusal of the court to credit his witnesses. Poor Lesurque, at the time of the crime, had been driving in the country with a prostitute from the Palace of Equality, surely the most euphemistically named whorehouse of my knowledge. The court will not believe Lesurque's girl friend, and the other members of the band do not attempt to clear him in order to protect their real leader.

The unfeeling processes of the law—the courts and prosecution wanting a conviction more than justice, Lesurque hamstrung on each minor error of his witnesses, the silence of the others accused—could not but end in his execution at the guillotine. The story, to this point, is told with painstaking historical accuracy. It might have gone this far with honesty in Hollywood, but we would have had a last-minute exposure of the real criminal and Lesurque a free man in the arms of his wife and children as the thing fades out. But no; Lesurque was executed and he is executed in the picture.

The spirit of grave regard for truth infuses *The Courier of Lyons* with an extraordinary interest. Blanchar's acting is, as in *Un Carnet de Bal,* and *Crime et Chatiment,* one of the too-infrequent thrills of the movies. The other principals and the innumerable fine bits, added to Blanchar's work, make this picture a major production. For once, a famous stage producer, Maurice Lehmann, has adventured into the films without carrying all of the habits of the drama with him.

The thunderous decadence of the gangster drama, brought on mainly by the warning forefinger of Will Hays and Damon Runyon's grand spoofing in *A Slight Case of Murder,* cannot, it becomes apparent, be forestalled by new dramatic stunts. *You and Me,* produced and directed by Fritz Lang for Paramount, introduces enough innovations to fairly overbalance the pure ridiculousness of the plot. George Raft and Sylvia Sidney are two parolees, working for a benevolent department-store magnate whose hobby is the salvaging of criminals. They marry in violation of parole rules, and Raft's ultimate discovery of his wife's past leads him, for some strange reason, to go back to the old mob. He is greeted in an underground room by all the lads chanting a feverish choral to the effect that you can't

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get away from the mob. The chant is stylized, the camera provides counterpoint by flashbacks to the prison, and Lang's underworld effects are used as they were in *M*. The gang plans to rob the department store, Sylvia tips off the philanthropist, and the boys are met by a committee when they get inside the store. Then the bottom drops out of everything. The nice boss and his boys exit, leaving Sylvia to show the boys the path of rectitude. Miss Sidney goes to a blackboard and delivers a Chautauqua lecture to the effect that crime does not pay, with figures to prove it. This melts all of the rough characters in a twinkling and they vow never to steal the jam again.

One can have only admiration for the remarkable Fritz Lang who made the great pictures, *M* and *Fury*. Enduring this one, however, is too much like sitting up with a sick friend. The Paramount audience greeted it indulgently enough, laughing at the gags and sometimes concurring with my roars of pure incredulity. Sylvia Sidney is darn good and Kurt Weill's music enhances the theatrical effect. For the record, *You and Me* is an ignoble experiment.

Jean Gabin, the redoubtable French actor of forgotten-man roles, is present with a picture by Julien Duvivier, who is famous for *Un Carnet de Bal*. The new tenant at the Filmarte, *They Were Five,* is concerned with five unemployed men who win a lottery prize.

After the celebration of victory, the men start planning what they are going to do with the money. Each one has his pet project but they heed Gabin's plea that they stick together and go to the country to live. There they find an old villa and convert it into an inn. A woman comes between Mario and Jack, and Jack decently disappears to maintain harmony. Mario, a fugitive from the police, is finally caught and forced to leave the country. The *belle équipe* is further reduced when another falls from the roof on opening day and is killed, leaving Gabin and Charlot, who is having trouble with his estranged wife. Gabin falls in love with her and it begins to appear as though the last two will be parted because of a woman. Common sense intervenes, however, when they talk it over, and both renounce the interloping female.

The plot is simple enough and phony enough. Gabin is someone you should see, especially in his last picture under Duvivier. The picture has a fine spirit and its development is logical and warmly handled. I'll get a little more excited when I see Gabin in a picture about an unemployed worker who does not win a lottery.

Gold Diggers in Paris—a Warner Brothers picture, directed by Ray Enright, with musical numbers directed by Busby Berkeley; story by Jerry Wald, Richard Macauley, and Maurice Lee; from an idea by Jerry Horwin and James Seymour; music and lyrics by Harry Warren, Al Dubin, and Johnny Mercer; with Rudy Vallee, Rosemary Lane, Hugh Herbert, Allen Jenkins, Gloria Dickson, and Melville Cooper—stinks.

JAMES DUGAN.

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Walt Whitman's Democracy

Philip Stevenson

I accept Reality and dare not question it. . . .
(This day I am jetting the stuff of far more arrogant republics.)
—"Song of Myself."

THE revival of interest in Walt Whitman is largely due to the recognition that he is America's most powerful and inspired democratic poet. It is therefore particularly important for us to understand more clearly what Whitman meant by the democracy he praised so ardently in *Leaves of Grass*. Did he accept as his idea of democracy the nineteenth-century laissez-faire society in which he lived? What did he understand by individualism? Was he simply an idealist and romantic? How did he reconcile the "aggregate" and the "separate"? The answer to such questions should provide the clue to a more profound interpretation of Whitman's significance for our day.

Like all major poets, Whitman chose to let the intent of his communication remain implicit in his verse. In his prose works, however, he attempted a more logical and schematic presentation of his ideas. It is useful to reexamine Whitman's various prefaces, his notes, lectures, and essays—particularly *Democratic Vistas*. We must not rely on a quoted phrase or two to define and clarify Whitman's position, but let him speak for himself as fully as limited space will permit.

Before taking up his definition of and program for democracy, it will be well for us to consider to what degree and in what sense Whitman was an "individualist," an "egoist," a "romantic."

The most casual glance at Whitman's work will dismiss the notion that "individualism" or "egoism" meant to him anything like selfishness or irresponsibility, self-preoccupation, or a ruthless will to power. He repeatedly used these words in contexts in which we should today employ *individuality* or *personality*, meaning the ripest and sanest development of a person in relation to his community. Explicitly and often he rejected the narrow meaning of these terms and insisted that the individual counted for nothing apart from the mass. To him it was "the common ambition" that "strains for elevations, to become some privileged exclusive"; whereas "the master sees greatness and health in being part of the mass; nothing will do as well as common ground. . . . The great word Solidarity has arisen." The meaning is unmistakable. Whitman's great individual, "the master," would resemble Abraham Lincoln rather than any square-jawed "rugged individualist" or any beetle-browed roaring dictator. True individuality, in other words, was a dialectical unity of opposites.

> The origin-idea of the singleness of man, individualism, will be found cropping forth even from opposite ideas. But the mass, or lump character, for imperative reasons, is ever to be weighed, borne in mind, and provided for. *Only from it . . . comes the other, comes the chance of individualism. The two are contradictory, but our task is to reconcile them.* (Italics mine—P. S.)

Lest this be thought an isolated instance of Whitman's dialectical approach to the problem of the relation of the one to the many, consider the following:

> The last, best dependence [of democracy] is to be upon humanity itse and its own inherent, normal, full-grown qualities, *without any sup stitious support whatever. The idea of perfect individualism it is, inde that deepest tinges and gives character to the idea of the aggreg* (Italics mine—P. S.)

Or this:

> For to democracy, the leveler, the unyielding principle of the average is surely join'd another principle, equally unyielding, closely tracking th first, indispensable to it, opposite (as the sexes are opposite) . . . cor fronting and ever modifying the other, often clashing, paradoxical, y neither of highest avail without the other. . . . This second principle individuality . . . identity—personalism.

It is emphatically no accident that the very first two lines the very first poem of his democratic epic, *Leaves of Grass,* a

> One's-self I sing, a simple separate person,
> Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.

Indeed, he tells us, in the "1872 Preface," that *Leaves of G*

> . . . is, in its intentions, the song of a great composite *democratic i vidual,* male or female. And following on and amplifying the same pose, I suppose I have in mind to run through the chants of this vo (if ever completed) the thread-voice, more or less audible, of an ag gated, inseparable, unprecedented, vast, composite, electric *democ nationality.* (Whitman's italics—P. S.)

The dialectical unity of the individual and the mass is the of his whole communication. Not only his book as a whole, such individual poems as, for example, the "Song of Mys will be (has been!) completely misunderstood and misinterpr unless we recognize his belief in egoism as the full flowerin the democratic individual, rooted in and indissolubly a par the democratic aggregate, not antagonistic to but, on the contr triumphantly expressing the aspirations of the masses. "I c tain multitudes" can only be understood as implying also, "Mu tudes contain me—or express themselves through me."

Labeling Whitman a nineteenth-century egoistic individua would be fantastic enough; but it is even sillier to place l among the nineteenth-century romantic poets. Here again erence to his prose will be helpful. The hall-mark of Rouss esque romanticism is belief in the uniqueness and self-suffic of the individual human soul, in the absolute freedom of the vidual will. Your true romantic cannot admit to any limita Man, to him, being godlike in essence, is only prevented expressing his perfection by the "unnatural" conditions of a ilized environment. Whence it follows that the individual i natural and implacable enemy of society, which, however, able to dominate or "rise above" by an act of will.

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So much for theory. In practice what happens to the romantic is this. His uniqueness and the absolute freedom of his will are daily contradicted by objective conditions, and in order to preserve his illusions he retreats from the objective world and builds a private subjective world of his own. In the decline of romanticism we find him a despairing pessimist, hating men for their imperfections or hugging his vision in hermetic isolation or touched with paranoiac superman delusions—in any case blindly fighting the social forces that would root out social evils, because they at the same time threaten to dispel his illusions.

Only by distorting the romantic premises, or by grossly misinterpreting Whitman's message, could an attempt be made to fit Whitman into the frame of pure romanticism. We have seen that, to him, individuality was not an absolute but a dialectical unity. His "perfect" individual was completely identified with mass character and mass aspiration. More cheerfully than almost any other mortal, he admitted his own human imperfections. No poet was ever farther from superman delusions. None sang so eloquently of "the common," "the concrete," "the normal." In a thousand variations he asserted that "the average man of a land at last only is important." He never tired of advocating the cause of the masses of "working-men and working-women," "the farmers and mechanics" of America, or of exposing the evils of economic exploitation. He loved the people, both in the mass and as individuals, as did no other American of his day with the ssible exception of his cherished hero, Lincoln.

He inspired and applauded rebels and revolutionists against dalism and reaction at all times and in all countries. As for thorny question of free will and necessity, we shall find him h closer to the dialectical views of Engels on this point than he absolutism of Rousseau. Whitman wrote:

Strange as it may seem, we only attain to freedom by a knowledge , and implicit obedience to, Law. . . . The shallow . . . consider liberty release from all law, from every constraint. The wise see in it, on the ntrary, the potent Law of Laws, namely, the fusion and combination the conscious will, or partial individual law, with those universal, nal, unconscious ones, which run through all Time, pervade history, e immortality, give moral purpose to the entire objective world, and last dignity to human life.

ile Engels expressed it this way in *Anti-Dühring:*

eedom does not consist in the dream of independence of natural , but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives stematically making them work toward definite ends.

rue, Whitman wrote in a period of literary romanticism was influenced by it. He often employed its language in quali-, modifying, or contradicting its concepts. You may plausibly end that he seems, like Hegel, to stand the dialectic on its . Admittedly, the democracy he praised so fulsomely in his is was never more than a rosy dream. But he himself was lly aware of this! "The fruition of democracy, on aught a grand scale, resides altogether in the future." In America, t an ordinary one is the issue. The United States are destined er to surmount the gorgeous history of feudalism, or else e the most tremendous failure of time." What he exalted magnified in *Leaves of Grass* were the signs, the portents, human materials of the future full-grown democracy.

ur America today I consider in many respects as but indeed a vast hing mass of *materials,* ampler, better (worse also) than previously wn—eligible to be used to carry toward its crowning stage, and build good, the great ideal nationality of the future. . . .

y no means were his eyes closed to the gross evils of nine-h-century laissez-faire or to the "hollowness at heart" of the ican ruling class:

spectacle is appalling. . . . The depravity of the business classes country is not less than has been supposed, but infinitely greater. fficial services . . . except the judiciary, are saturated in corruption, y, falsehood, maladministration; and the judiciary is tainted. The cities reek with respectable as much as non-respectable robbery and relism. . . . In business (this all-devouring modern word, business), e sole object is, by any means, pecuniary gain.

In spite of the profligacy of the rulers, however, he felt justified in his oft-chanted optimism; for,

. . . behind this fantastic farce, enacted on the visible stage of society, solid things and stupendous labors are to be discover'd, existing crudely and going on in the background, to advance and tell themselves in time.

In other words,

the morbid facts of American politics and society everywhere are but passing incidents . . . weeds, annuals, of the rank, rich soil—not central, enduring, perennial things. . . .

A young democracy, he insisted, could not be judged in the samples of its temporary chieftains and spokesmen:

The genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors, or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors—but always most in the common people, south, north, west, east, in all its states, through all its mighty amplitude.

He had noticed, he said, how for the time being "the millions of sturdy farmers and mechanics" were "the helpless supplejacks of comparatively few politicians. . . ."

Sad, serious, deep truths. Yet there are other, still deeper, amply confronting, dominating truths. Over those politicians and great and little rings, and over all their insolence and wiles, and over the powerfulest parties, looms a power, too sluggish maybe, but ever holding decisions and decrees in hand, ready, with stern process, to execute them as soon as plainly needed. . . .

Decidedly, democratic society was in its adolescence, its true character as yet undefined. It could not be credited with having attained maturity until it had

. . . fashion'd, systematized, and triumphantly finish'd and carried out, *in its own interest,* and with unparallel'd success, a new earth and a new man. (Italics mine.—P. S.)

Whitman had more than a crude notion of the process of historical evolution. For him democracy was not an abstract and eternal good but a finite human growth, a culmination of "all the developments of history." He recognized the usefulness and inevitability, for their historic periods, of other social forms.

America does not repel the past, or what the past has produced under its forms, or amid other politics, or the idea of castes, or the old religions —accepts the lesson with calmness [that] the life which served its requirements has passed into the life of the new forms . . . that it was fittest for its days—that its action has descended to the stalwart and well-shaped heir who approaches—and that he [i.e., democracy] shall be fittest for his days.

He was aware that democracy had developed, and would continue to develop not only "by all the moral forces," but also "by trade, finance, machinery, intercommunications." He accepted the theory that

the only real foundation-walls and bases—and also *sine qua non* afterward—of true and full civilization, is the eligibility and certainty of boundless products for feeding, clothing, sheltering everybody . . . and that then the esthetic and mental business will take care of itself.

The "stern process" of social development could "no more be stopp'd than the tides, or the earth in its orbit." And once democracy had attained maturity, its purpose would be "to illustrate, at all hazards, this doctrine . . .

that man, properly train'd in sanest, highest freedom may and must become a law, and series of laws, unto himself, surrounding and providing for not only his personal control, but all his relations to other individuals, and to the State; and that, while other theories, as in the past histories of nations, have proved wise enough, and indispensable perhaps for their conditions, *this,* as matters now stand in our civilized world, is the only scheme worth working from, as warranting results like those of Nature's laws, reliable, when once establish'd, to carry on themselves.

In this passage we see both Whitman's essential realism and his residue of romantic idealism. To say that man may become a law unto himself is to rule out the romantic axiom that he is a unique free soul who is already a law unto himself. It is to accept human limitations and urge human perfectibility—not pro-

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claim it as a premise—in the ultimate democratic mass-individual. Man will reach after perfection "in his own interest" and in accordance with, not in willful opposition to, natural laws. Yet note that this scheme is one to work *from* rather than *toward*. This is an example of Whitman's Hegelian thought-process. He starts from the ultimate aim and criticizes objective conditions according to the degree to which they fall short of the final stage; whereas Marx, who placed the dialectic on its material feet, began by a scientific observation of objective conditions past and present ("The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles"), and worked by induction toward the ultimate aim. Marx's emphasis is constantly on the objective situation and our immediate tasks; while Whitman, secure in his faith concerning what we are to become, is content to speak vaguely of a "stern process," "stupendous labors," and sluggish powers looming in the background with unspecific decrees in hand.

To the extent that he stressed the necessarily ideal future at the expense of present concrete tasks, Whitman can properly be called romantic and idealistic. But having said this about him we have scarcely touched his true importance. What matters is that he speaks to us with a sincerity so ringing that we are inspired to act in a way that no merely accurate scientific statement of the truth could possibly inspire.

We must not ask the poet to play the political economist. Science and poetry speak in different tongues, albeit their truth is the same. As a matter of fact, Whitman insisted upon the political significance of his work. *Leaves of Grass* as a whole, he says explicitly, is to be construed as a "radical utterance," while "the special meaning of the 'Calamus' cluster . . . mainly resides in its political significance." If a man can give us the emotional inspiration for social change, shall we require him also to detail the particular mechanism by which the change is to be wrought? Is it not enough that in becoming the greatest poet of democracy Whitman came within an ace of being at the same time the first great poet of Socialism?

The complete history of democracy, Whitman believed, would exhibit three main stages.

> The First Stage was the planning and putting on record the political foundation rights of immense masses of people—indeed, all people . . . not for classes, but for universal man, and is embodied in the compacts of the Declaration of Independence, and, as it began and has now grown, with its amendments, the Federal Constitution—and in the state governments, with all their interiors, and with general suffrage; those having the sense not only of what is in themselves, but that their certain several things started, planted, hundreds of others in the same direction duly arise and follow.

The political acuity displayed in this statement is astonishing. Whitman claims no more than that these foundation rights of democracy have been "planned," "put on record," "started," "planted." There must be "hundreds of others in the same direction" before we have anything like a full-fledged democracy. Note, too, his unqualified acceptance of the Declaration of Independence and his careful qualification of the Constitution to include the amendments. We are justified in suspecting that he would not have accepted it without the Bill of Rights or the anti-slavery amendments.

Whitman considered that this stage, the enunciation of basic principles, was virtually complete by the end of the Civil War, with the abolition of slavery and the guarantees of personal freedom from bondage—though, to be sure, there were to be many elaborations and amplifications.

> The Second Stage relates to material prosperity, wealth, produce, labor-saving machines, iron, cotton, local, state, and continental railways, intercommunication and trade with all lands, steamships, mining, general employment, organization of great cities, cheap appliances for comfort, numberless technical schools, books, newspapers, a currency for money circulation, etc.

In this, the economic field, Whitman believed that the existing democracy was well on the way to maturity. "Not the least doubtful am I on any prospects of . . . material success." In his day the relative prosperity of the American masses could be more sharply contrasted with the poverty of Europe than it can today; and he felt that all that was needed was "a more universal ownership of property, general homesteads, general comfort—a vast intertwining reticulation of wealth." He failed to see that mass production had already invalidated the Jeffersonian ideal of private ownership by the masses of the means of wealth production. He insisted that:

> As Sismondi pointed out, the true prosperity of a nation is not in the great wealth of a special class, but is only to be really attain'd in having the bulk of the people provided with homes or land in fee simple. This may not be the best show, but it is the best reality.

He was by no means unaware of the rise of a wealthy privileged class in America. He had warned that:

> Of all dangers to a nation, as things exist in our day, there can be no greater one than having certain portions of the people set off from the rest by a line drawn—they not privileged as others, but degraded, humiliated, made of no account.

As time went on, the existence of this class bothered him to such a point that he finally began to question whether, after all, the tendency in America, as in the foreign "feudal" societies, was not toward a greater social inequality and unbalance. Calling attention to "the wealth of the civilized world, as contrasted with its poverty," he exclaimed:

> A rich person ought to have a strong stomach. As in Europe the wealth of today mainly results from, and represents, the rapine, murder, outrages, treachery, hoggishness, of hundreds of years ago, and onward, later, so in America, after the same token—(not yet so bad, perhaps, or at any rate not so palpable—we have not existed long enough—but we seem to be doing our best to make it up).

He had the utmost contempt for "the toss and pallor of yea of money-making" with its "shameful stuffing while others starve He burst out against the policy of tariff "protection," *not* me on principle (and this is important, for it is an instance of practical realism), but because of the concrete observable *fact* that the resulting "plunder" was divided among "a few score select persons," "a vulgar aristocracy" of bankers and political favorites, instead of among "the masses" of "workmen and workwomen."

His notes on this question were written in the age of the robber barons. Labor struggles had become intensified to such a point that no observer of the democratic scene could ignore them, least of all Whitman who had editorialized on the subject, and always on the side of the workers, ever since his early days on the Brooklyn *Eagle*. Now, however, the language of the labo movement began to color the prose in which he expressed hi growing doubts of the "unparallel'd success" of democracy in th economic field.

> The American Revolution of 1776 was simply a great strike, succes ful for its immediate object—but whether a real success . . . yet remai to be settled. The French Revolution was absolutely a strike, and a v terrible and relentless one, against ages of bad pay, unjust division wealth-products, and the hoggish monopoly of a few, rolling in sup fluity, against the vast bulk of the work-people, living in squalor.
>
> If the United States, like the countries of the Old World, are al grow vast crops of poor, desperate, dissatisfied, nomadic, miserably-w populations, such as we see looming upon us of late years . . . then o republican experiment, notwithstanding all its surface-successes, is heart an unhealthy failure.

Possibly the existing republic was not the fittest form for d mocracy. Still there could be no question, in Whitman's min of going back, of retreat, of reaction to outworn social order We must press forward. The question was not whether to "m archize" or "democratize." World conditions clearly called "the wider democratization of institutions," and the only q tions worth considering were "*how,* and in what degree and p most prudently to democratize." Apparently he did not real until Traubel taught him late in life, that the "wider democr zation of institutions" meant in the end their socialization. S

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without "studying up in political economy," he could see two classes in contrast and in conflict, and he passionately embraced he side of hope and health and progress.

The third and final stage in the maturation of democracy (Whitman's dearest concern) was, more or less concurrently: (1) the unification of the whole world within a democratic brotherhood of nations; (2) the evolution of a race of fully developed democratic individuals; (3) the appearance of a "native expression-spirit" in literature, art, and science, equal to the grandeur of the democracy it would portray. In his mind these seemed but three aspects of a single fruition. Mature democratic individuals, secure in the inseparability of their welfare from the welfare of the mass, could not produce other than "orbic" creations of the democratic spirit which, by its irrefutable superiority over older social forms, must inevitably extend to enfold the world in one vast democratic fraternity—"that dazzling, pensive dream of ages!"

> Topping democracy, this most alluring record, that it alone can bind all nations, all men, of however various and distant lands, into a brotherhood, a family. It is the old, yet ever-modern dream of earth, out of her eldest and her youngest, her fond philosophers and poets . . . making he races comrades, and fraternizing all.

Although expressed in his own terms, it is clear that the ends of Whitman's democracy—"a new earth and a new man"—were those of modern international Socialism.

As might be expected, it is from Whitman's cultural program that American writers have still the most to learn. There we see him most closely identified with our own objectives and point of view. For he demanded

> . . a program of culture, drawn out, not for a single class alone, or for ie parlors or lecture-rooms, but with an eye to practical life, the West, e working-men, the facts of farms and jack-planes and engineers . . . d *not* restricted by conditions ineligible to the masses.

He was the implacable foe of art-for-art's-sake, the ivory tower, and "that modern esthetic contagion a queer friend of mine calls the *beauty disease.*" The poetry of democracy should aim "to arouse and initiate, more than to define and finish." "A great poem is no finish to a man or woman, but rather a beginning. . . . The touch of [the great poet], like Nature, tells in action."

> The efforts of the true poets, founders, religions, literatures, all ages, iave been, and ever will be, our time and times to come, essentially the ame—to bring people back from their persistent strayings and sickly ibstractions, to the costless average, divine, original concrete.

The "new and greater literatus order," he said, would produce 'superber tableaux and growths of language, songs, operas, orations, lectures, architecture"—by no means for art's sake but for reconstructing, democratizing society." Works of art should be ested first, perhaps, by their technical competence; then, if they assed that test and claimed admission as "first-class works," they ere to be "strictly and sternly tried by their foundation in, and liation, in the highest sense, and always indirectly, of the ethic nciples, and eligibility to free, arouse, dilate." Therefore in his n work he had been more anxious "to suggest the songs of l endeavor and manly evolution, and furnish something for s of outdoor athletes, than to make perfect rhymes, or reign he parlors."

Mature democratic poetry would comprise not "the smooth alks, trimm'd hedges, posies and nightingales" of the English oets, but "the whole orb, with its geologic history, the cosmos, rrying fire and snow, that rolls through the illimitable areas." would exclude no aspect of life or knowledge. "Exact science l its practical movements are no checks on the greatest poet, always his encouragement and support." The poetry of the ire must "inspire itself with science and the modern," and ifront "the voiceless but ever erect and active, pervading under- ig will and typic aspiration of the [democratic] land in a spirit dred to itself." It must be on the grandest possible heroic scale, irly overtopping the merely feudal grandeurs of the Elizaians.

By comparison with this vision, contemporary literature was upsetting to contemplate. Education, manners, literature, said Whitman, were still permeated by "feudalism, caste, the ecclesiastical traditions." Of poets "of a certain sort" there were "indeed plenty . . . many elegant, many learn'd, all complacent." But they were mostly "dandies and ennuyees" piping their "thin sentiments of parlors, parasols . . . or whimpering and crying about something, chasing one aborted conceit after another, and forever occupied in dyspeptic amours with dyspeptic women." In short, they were precisely the romantic type, and the depth of Whitman's scorn measures the gulf between him and the romantic tradition.

In the field of imaginative American literature Whitman could find "not a single first-class work, not a single great literatus." This sometimes made him lose his temper.

> Do you call those genteel little creatures American poets? Do you term that perpetual, pistareen, paste-pot work, American art, American drama, taste, verse? I think I hear, echoed as from some mountain-top afar in the West, the scornful laugh of the Genius of these States.

What he really heard, of course, was himself. He had said again and again that democratic art must overtop the gorgeous flowers of feudalism. Yet no democratic Shakespeare loomed in America, no "greater literatus order." Very well, then, he would be its forerunner.

Whitman never claimed to be a full-statured "orbic bard" of the future society. He was merely the first—not a finished product to be slavishly copied, but a trail-blazer—a "Beginner," to use his term, and surely the most prolific of suggestions in all literary history.

Although he wrote in a romantic and idealistic age, he transcended the limitations of romanticism and idealism. When his healthy, steady gaze revealed the shoddiness of contemporary society, by contrast with his dazzling ideal, he did not become melancholic, or immure himself in ivory, or turn cynic and hate mankind for its humaneness. On the contrary, he listened courteously to Traubel's talk of scientific Socialism.

Alas, it was too late. By this time he was aged and semi-paralyzed. His major work was done. Simply, where the new doctrine coincided with his lifelong sympathies and intuitions, it pointed and clarified his expression:

> America is . . . for the great mass of people—the vast, surging, hopeful army of workers.
>
> The crowd of the grave working-men of our world—they are the hope, the sole hope, the sufficient hope of our democracy.

At Traubel's prompting, he verbally accepted Marxism. "Sometimes I think, I feel almost sure, Socialism is the next thing coming." And yet: "I shrink from it in some ways . . . sometimes I don't like to think of it."

His reluctance is so understandable! For Whitman to accept the indivisible whole of scientific Socialism meant invalidating the ideal tone and expression of too large a body of his work. He was old. It was too late to begin again. To face "the facts of farms and jack-planes" with the old heartiness, to make the tragic admission that his "practical fraternity . . . over the whole globe," his classless international democracy, could not be born without another, a final death-grapple with "feudalism," was too great a strain on his waning strength. He didn't like to think of it.

Once Traubel asked him directly if he thought the class that had expropriated the workers could ever be persuaded to return the loot. Whitman replied, "I'm afraid not. I'm afraid the people will have to fight for what they get"—words of reluctant resignation rather than simple recognition of inevitability. Traubel tried to cheer him up—called him, flatteringly, "a pretty good revolutionist after all!" And Whitman was pleased—but not really fooled. Whether because of unfamiliarity with theory, or lack of direct contact with the Marxist movement of his day, Whitman was never a thoroughgoing Socialist, and he knew it.

What he was, explicitly, was simply *the most important example of, and spokesman for, the transition in American literary*

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tradition between the idealism of our revolutionary middle-class democracy and the materialism of our coming revolutionary working-class democracy. His ideas might be still couched in the language of the first; but his sympathies and purpose were already stoutly on the side of the second.

This is his claim and his right to our most serious reconsideration. Millions of Americans are still faced with the need of making, in themselves, the same transition. With Walt Whitman, comprehended and clarified, they are privileged to travel the entire journey in the company of our greatest poet. And when they reach the end, they will not be, like him, old and tired and sick. The final realistic truths which he could only accept with his head and mumble with withered lips, they can believe with their bowels and fight for with their fists.

Spanish Diary

James Neugass

January 13.

Drove down the canyon river-bottom of the Alfambra Valley and arrived at Tortojada, six miles from Teruel and one from the front lines, in time to scramble down a gulley and dive into one of the very good caves in its side. The sky is as blue as it can only be when there is snow on the ground. The few thin clouds that the wind drives from peak to peak, whiter than anti-aircraft puffs, interfere neither with their aim nor ours.

At the bottom of the narrow valley run our road and the Alfambra River edged by lines of dry, bare poplars which for miles are the only firewood but for beams from destroyed houses, and the new Zaragossa-Teruel railway, complete with stations and tunnels, but without rails. Stream, road, and railway are beautifully protected from artillery fire by the ridge, just beyond which are the trenches. The town, on the far side of the road and a half mile from it, is a steep, crooked mess of scrambled mud and rubble houses, one-fourth in ruins. Because we are out of range of their artillery and machine-guns, because it is very cold, and because we are so near the fighting, Tortojada is an excellent place for a classification post. The recently dug cave in which we have installed supplies of sterile gauze, adhesive tape, bandages, stretchers and blankets, morphine, caffeine, adrenalin, and camphor; a field telephone connected with the positions on the hill; and bread, coffee, beans, canned beef, milk, and jam, is already half full of freshly dressed wounded waiting for evacuation. The rest is up to the boys dug in on the hill.

January 14.

Plenty of time to write. It is 1:45 p.m. and there have been very few cars on the roads today. The weather is perfect, except for artificial man-made clouds on the brown crest of the hill, a mile across the valley. Shells break white and raise pillars of stone-dust. We aren't so far from their artillery as we had thought.

I had finished shaving by nine a.m. and was just about to go down to the river to brush my teeth when the men first ran to the *refugios*. I had been hearing the average explosions and idly watching shells break under the long hillcrest, and had not noticed the sound of the first planes.

That was about five hours ago. Leaning out of the opening of a dugout like a groundhog looking for the February sun, I have seen the same two-motored, three-motored, four- and twenty-motored squadrons of bombers, pursuit and attack planes pass by tens of times. Never counted more than eighty-four fascist planes overhead at any one time, but of course I couldn't see the other side of the hill. One mile away by bullet flight lies a long, low gap in the hills which the Thaelmann Battalion is defending. That is the point at which they are trying to break through.

The main kinds of noises are: (1) constant, increasing, rising, and falling hum of great and small plane-motors everywhere; (2) shells exploding on the hills; (3) the machine-gunning of the infantry attacks and counter-attacks; (4) the drilling roar of planes diving on the town underneath which I sit; and (5) the backwards, gasping stutter of the machine-gun bullets they throw at us, peppered by hand-grenades. Of course there have been other sights and sounds, such as the white-burning glare of incendiary shells, some below the ridge and some on the road, and the twittering of birds in the riverside trees.

The air in these rat-holes, dug in the precipitous bank of the river, shakes and pounds. A bit of paper shudders on the floor. A dog has been wandering about the far bank of the river all morning. There are other little mongrels in the cave with us. Those birds in the dry, gray trees wrangled all morning. I have never before heard such a disgusting noise except in cities at nightfall, when whole ivy walls of sparrows chatter before going to sleep. The birds are now gone. I wonder where.

The boys are saying that this is worse than Brunete last July. Brunete was supposed to be worse than anything else.

At one time, their Pavos ("turkeys" are what Aragon peasants call the German trimotors) and whole squadrons of other planes did all sorts of fancy sky-writing in white, just like advertising back in the States. At first, we thought that the lines of white smoke coming out of their exhaust-pipes were gas. Then somebody thought he saw a fascist emblem being traced out. Soon the sky was full of the Phalangist emblem—gigantic sheaves of arrows bound by a yoke. The display was supposed to constitute some sort of fancy psychological trick, I suppose, as if the planes were saying, "Here we are; this is our proud emblem; come and get us." Their artillery had been throwing incendiary shells against our hillside for the same pseudo-psychological purposes, since the only inflammable things on these desert hillsides are low thorn-bushes. No ambulances could live on these roads. We will have to wait until nightfall.

I thought it best to get my car ready. Its radiator was empty. All cooling systems are kept drained, since they would freeze in an hour if left full, and there is no garage capable of making repairs for a hundred miles.

I went down to the river with three pitchers, filled them, then walked back up the hill. There was no one to be seen anywhere in the valley, no cars, no movement but for the smoke of the shells. Finally I was able to make out three cavalrymen winding up the hill to the pass through which the enemy is trying to break. I felt, well, as if I wanted to get the job done. So long as you don't run, you aren't afraid.

Now I am back in our underground classification-post, waiting for orders, and feeling better. I should have hated to have been sent on the road and caught with no water in my radiator.

I am worried (1) that the fascists will come through the pass, cut the road and bottle us up in the town with all our equipment and ambulances; (2) that the boys up on the hill are taking a lot of punishment. We are at the apex of the shock-center of the fascist attack. The fall of Teruel was a slap on their cheek which was heard all around the world. They are spending a lot of fancy dough on explosives to get it back. So far as this town is concerned, their gunners hit nothing but Mussolini's bankroll.

Well, the fireworks have let up slightly. Maybe their aviators went home for lunch. I am going to look for some myself, right now.

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January 15.

The fascist aviators must really have gone to lunch yesterday, for about half an hour. When they should have been eating their dessert, clouds had begun to drift across the Cerro Rojo, or Red Ridge, across the valley. The brilliance of the morning had dissolved into drifting mist and haze. I thought that we were safe. Very soon, the air again filled with motors. During all the cloudless morning, we had at least been able to see the planes coming.

Things kept getting hotter and hotter. But there was no artillery fire. I learned from the wounded I carried that night that there had been no "zero hours" and "over-the-tops." The fascist infantry had attacked all afternoon. The two armies were so closely interlocked that cannon-fire was impossible.

The air tactics of the enemy had now changed. Their planes were now traveling below the clouds. Whirlwinds of twenty attack-biplanes appeared at two or three places at once, diving, machine-gunning, rising, and whirling back.

Then our planes came. I knew that they were ours—because of black anti-aircraft puffs (ours are white), because of the sudden wheel of flame and black smoke on the lower slope of the ridge, where theirs had unloaded all at once, in flight, and because of the sounds of dog-fighting. In half an hour the air was clean. We lost one plane, and they three. This we counted a defeat. Tonight their commander will telegraph Hitler, and in twenty-four hours their three lost planes will be replaced with six brand new ones. That night I looted the ignition diagram from the dashboard of a Fiat we had knocked down. All the writing on it was in Italian.

Night started to fall. We wandered back to our outdoor kitchen, where pots were boiling. Again and still again there were alarms. This time I found a cavalrymen's dugout. We were machine-gunned until the light failed, and it was comfortably dark. Their planes seem to have orders to bring no ammunition home. Whatever they have left, at the end of the day, they empty on us—bombs of odd weights, grenades, machine-gun chambers. They have ammunition to waste, and they waste it. I did not know how low their planes were coming. When they dive that low, you don't look. You sit with your back to what openings in the wall there may be, and wait. I thought at first that a machine-gun right outside the cellar window where I sat was firing on the *avions*. Then I decided that the machine-gun sound must be the starting of a motorcycle. But because the sputter invariably came simultaneously with the diving of the planes, I realized that what I was hearing was the sound of explosive machine-gun bullets, striking the street outside the window. Later, I saw the scars they had made, strings of craters a foot across and two to four inches deep in the frozen road. Hand-grenades had also fallen.

The results of the day's attack on the town were hardly apparent. New-bombed houses are hard to tell from old-bombed houses, and the blood of those who had been killed and wounded in them had soaked into the plaster-dust in which the ruins floated. Four new-wrecked houses and eight dead, I should say. Their aim is bad. They hit only one out of ten, but they come back ten and a hundred times. Every day, the towns of the Alfambra Valley become lower to the ground and dirtier. Our faces and hands and the skin beneath our clothing become dirtier and dirtier. The dead are the dirtiest of all, not so much with blood and dust and mud, but with the grayness that so soon darkens their faces and fingernails.

The lines on the ridge had held. After dark, life in Tortojada began where it had been broken off by the sound of the planes that morning. Horses were watered, sheep moved through the twisted streets down to the river, fires were again lit, and smells of cooking mixed with the fumes of burning damp bandages and gasoline, which are the nasal trademarks of this neighborhood and of war. Women who had spent the day with their children in the fields or in the caves of the mountains back of us came back to their houses, or to what had been their houses.

The first wounded arrived soon after dark. Some of them had been carried down the mountainside to the road, where they had been picked up by the first munitions trucks to come out after dark. Light-wounded walked in from the lines. A great jam of ambulances, loaded and empty, developed on the lip of the gully into whose side our post is cut, in the soft, chalky, tan clay of this region, the clay which streaked the crowns and rims of our hats, our elbows and knees, and the seats of our trousers.

Mules were packed with flat crates of cartridges and square boxes of grenades, and left for the ridge. Field-telephone wiremen went out to check their lines. A fortifications brigade rose out of the earth, and the cavalrymen led their horses out of concealed stables.

Since, for a reason I did not yet understand, I had not been sent out to pick up a load, I helped in the cave. By candlelight, stretcher after stretcher was carried down a ramp in one side of the gully and across the frozen stream in its bottom. My job was to cut off clothing. This must be done because of the danger of infection and because we must find out very quickly all the places where a man has been hit. Very few of the wounded I saw last night or at any other time were hit in only one place. Modern shrapnel breaks into fine metal spray that spreads as efficiently as water over an expensively groomed lawn back in the States. The modern machine-gun fires so fast that it seldom hits a man in a single place. You can't pull off a man's clothing, because this motion, however careful and slight, would grind the broken ends of his bones into his muscle. We carried the clothing out of the cave to a pit. Cartridge belt, rifle, bayonet, side-arms, and shoes are dumped beside the cave's mouth. Many a man got a good pair of shoes or a revolver from a classification post, not to speak of knapsacks, mess-tins, and spoons.

After the clothing comes off, and an inspection is made by the evacuation doctor, fresh gauze and adhesive are applied, and the case gets his anti-tetanus and gas-gangrene. He is given stimulants or sedatives, a card with his name, rank, brigade, and a description of injuries and medication, and then waits on a stretcher, under as many blankets as we can give him, until an ambulance pulls out for the rear. The sick are also evacuated from classification posts, and sometimes are given a night of sleep or a day of rest with us. Many frozen feet and ears were coming in.

As soon as the sun had gone down, I was ordered out to Kilometer 2½, just outside of Teruel, to the English Battalion. Without lights, of course, I drove for a few miles through troops, tanks, armored cars, mules, light artillery, until I came to a railroad bridge. The brigade, which was dug in behind the bridge and the embankments on both sides of it, removed sandbags from the road so that I could pass. I had an unpleasant feeling that the sandbags were being replaced after I left.

The other side of the bridge, traffic of all kinds had ceased. There were no sounds, in the light of the half-full moon, but for intermittent, nervous, single rifle-shots. If rifles are psychopaths, machine-guns are maniacs.

I began to wish I could see someone or hear a voice. There is no silence like that of red-hot spent bullets as they streak across the road at night. Tracers pass with a white light, like racing, supercharged fireflies, but I did not see many of these.

I got to the old anti-aireraft pit in which the English were and had set up their first-aid post. I was given a load of light-wounded. The heavy-wounded had left in a truck that afternoon. Dead lay stretched out like sausages on a griddle next to the road waiting for the *camion* which handles them.

I was told to go to a receiving hospital, twenty miles back over the mountains. The first five miles had to be done without lights, watching for old and new shell-holes. This road must be under fire during daylight. I climbed and climbed. Just as soon as I was able to turn on my lights, I was again driving blind, because I had run into the snow-fog which rises on the mountains of Aragon after a day of sunlight.

I got home, at five a.m. perhaps, to find my mattress gone. I picked out two feet of space on the floor of the ruined house where we slept, took off my shoes, and immediately went to sleep.

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"The Pseudo-Suicide"

A FRAGMENT

A. T. Rosen

Torches spurtled up. And from the sea
a searchlight sprang to the skyline and was botched
on wet resisting fog—when folded back
it broomed up flavors from the waterfront
and graced the Vigilantes' tilted heads
with essences of coffee, spice, and oil.

"Christian Americans!"

From poolrooms, bars,
and licensed agencies for crime, the mob
massed bristling like some hulking animal
that waits the trainer's signal to perform.

Among the listeners an old man stood
islanded in lone identity.
He was of that contemporary breed
who keep inskulled as if in quarantine
the prowling sickness which drives men to lean
over the very roof-edge of despair;
yet these are the ones who never jump, but stay
steady as any lounger on the sidewalk.
For they are pseudo-suicides who dream
that death is proxy to their will—dream
and find it better to dream than die.

He watched, as if in fever or hypnosis,
the face, rough as a chapped fist, jabbing
at the quick-eyed crowd to punctuate
a rattle of rhetoric; heard, like the rush
of coal down a tin chute, the patriot words
Law and Order, God, America,
encored by the mob and megaphoned
"to Nigger and Kike and gutless Government."

"Freedom don't mean anarchy"—

Instinct
came alive in the old man. His protest
screeched like an unoiled saw, "Mr. Speaker,
and Democracy—?"
"Democracy, my friend,"
(the face with stone-vacant headlights seemed to speed
unerringly toward him) "Democracy's
either gonna be streamlined or wind up
an ex-champ like yourself, old, on the bum."

The cynic eye-grin. The irascible stance
of a pit bull-terrier. He should have dared them both.
Old men who wait before the last exit,
the next in line to go—they should not wince
at slapping words.

". . . ours be a nation of youth."
Yet what was left of all his world but words?
He should have yelled, "You can't set traffic lights
on Age. Why even as you talk your time
is roaring in like a train ahead of schedule."

"New techniques, new ideas—"

He should have cried,
"Freedom, Opportunity, Love of Truth,
are these the old ones or is Hatred old,
is Prejudice, Poverty, Panic, Ignorance old?
And what's their worth, your old-new infamies?
You'll find them far less practical to your need
than luckcharms thick in cobweb of the past."
He should have shouted, "Stop that man!
Stop all such men—"

"Niggers, Reds, and Wops,
they've ganged up on us, made hell of our harbors;
Cargoes of cotton, iron, beef, oil, grain,
to feed and clothe and arm America
lie stalled in the hatches—"

He should have cried,
"In times when in the place of man-sized wheat
a parched earth sends up only runt-like sprouts,
when gradually the gates of Nightmare rise
around cities where the mind is a dark sky
full of electric, in times like these
such men are criminal, and worse—"
or else,
"It's not this simple strike he aims against
but at Society itself. He speaks
for chronic wretchedness, defeat, and death,
the privileged death after the last-lived shame."
The old man stood, a slouched shadow, vexed
by the guilt of wisdom gagged in him;
he knew the consequence when demagogues
juggle their dynamite among such mobs.
Yet kept still, not from fear of self,
but fear that free opinion be impinged.

"Strike out the strikers!"

Then the pipelines snapped,
the reservoirs caved in—out of the mob
ten thousand years of skirling savagery
broke loose.
Like an old silent man
Liberalism ran before the flood,
taking a last look at the face, galvanic,
that seemed to have no body but the dark.

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New Mc 8
New Masses, June 14, 1938
dressed. Her need for move-
perative. She got the roadster
n. lunch at the beach
ayed bride

Cowards of Us All

Ernest Brace

ELLEN sat rigidly erect. Arthur's temper had always seemed such a normal, healthy one—a temper which broke loose with gusto, raged lustily around its tormentor—usually imagined—and then returned calmly, sometimes smilingly, to its cage. It was not like that now. It had not been like that, Ellen realized, for a long time. It was venomous and the venom did not spurt freely, rather it seemed to be squeezed out with hysterical frenzy. Though she could hear every word Arthur spoke, she got up and tiptoed to the edge of the stone veranda to listen.

"Well, what the hell did you think I meant? That I wanted you to cry on them a little? God knows that would kill the bugs—and probably the flowers, too. . . . You didn't understand?" Arthur's voice was almost falsetto in his effort to make his words bitter. "Well, last month when you asked for a raise and you didn't understand what I said, you damn well said so. You better go back to Hungary or wherever the hell it is you came from if you can't learn English. Do you know what 'fired' means? It means get the hell out of here! You're no damn good and I don't want you around!"

Ellen turned quickly and went into the house. She crossed the cool, dim hall and ran lightly up the stairs. She disliked this feeling of running away, but she disliked even more the certainty that she could not escape from the thoughts and fears which had been growing so rank in her troubled mind recently. She stepped into the bathroom and closed the door. She leaned with her back against it, staring into the mirror opposite, feeling the cool surface of the one behind her.

She heard Arthur climbing the stairs. She remembered how he used to go up them two at a time, and she wondered how long ago he had stopped doing that. She had not noticed at the time. There were so many things she had not noticed at the time, things now suspended in the soft, pink haze of memory. She heard his bathroom door close. Silence settled like dust about her. Was he standing as she was, staring at his mirror? The two mirrors were back to back. She tried to imagine his face, square and somber, with a jaw and mouth that gave the impression of a heavily sagging mass rather than massiveness; the eyes were gray and resentfully stern. She could see the features, but the face as a living expression she could not imagine. She knew him too well and not at all. What could be the matter? What horrible menace could be driving him to such frenzy?

She pursed her thin lips, as she always did when she made up her mind to be sensible, and stepped up to the basin to wash her hands, though she had washed them only a half hour ago. She powdered her nose, which was thin and aquiline with flaring, almost translucent nostrils. She looked for a moment steadily and severely into her own blue eyes and quite leisurely went downstairs again. She stepped out on the veranda, picked up the magazine she had been looking at, and sat down in a broad wicker armchair.

As soon as she heard his step on the stairs she felt her whole body grow swiftly tense. She took a deep breath and tried to relax. She didn't want to quarrel. She didn't want to hear about the gardener. Arthur came out, lighting a cigarette.

"Hot today in the city," he said, snapping his lighter shut.

"It must have been awful. It was bad enough here."

He sat down with a deep sigh.

"I just fired Nick," he observed, sighing again.

"Why?" she asked, pretending surprise.

"I told him last week to spray the roses and he forgot it. I told him again yesterday, and tonight he tried to tell me he hadn't understood what I said. I guess he understands me now."

"That's too bad."

"What do you mean?"

She sensed that he had turned with sudden belligerency to stare at her.

"Just what I say. It's too bad he wasn't more satisfactory. We've had so many gardeners lately."

"And all of them expensive and worthless."

So he was worrying about money again. She said nothing, heeding the usual storm warnings.

"We'll get somebody by the day when we need work done. There's no sense having a man all the time, anyway."

"But you tried that and decided it was unsatisfactory."

"Well, plenty of other people seem to manage and I don't see why we can't. One thing we've got to do is to get out of this habit of spending money whether we can afford it or not."

"Are things really getting so bad again?"

"I don't know how things are—nobody does. But if I can help it I'm not going to get caught again with debts and responsibilities I can't afford. One week you make a little money, and the next you find the government has thought up a new tax to take away two or three times as much as you've made—and just to feed a lot of worthless people like Nick. God knows what's likely to happen to anything or anybody these days." He threw away his cigarette in exasperation and smoothed back his graying hair. His eyes were restlessly bitter. "And Willie wants to get married—on $22.50 a week. My God, I can't get over that! Even if he is young he's got eyes. He ought to be able to see what's happening all around him."

"I wouldn't worry about that—now. I shouldn't be surprised if he changed his mind. I happened to hear him talking over the telephone with her last night, and if any young man was ever irritated, he was—not angry or jealous or indignant—just irritated."

"Well, I hope you're right."

"I think your telling him flatly that under no circumstances, sickness, babies, anything, could they come to live here impressed him. I guess he was afraid you might really mean it."

"I did."

"I know, but of course parents don't let their children starve if they can help it—at least our kind don't."

Arthur frowned but he did not deny her assertion.

"I wish we could sell this place," he said at length.

"Oh dear, is it as bad as that? You know we can't—not without losing a great deal—and we've got to live somewhere."

"I know, but I'm tired of the whole set-up. I'm tired of houses and gardens and servants. I'm getting so I hate every tree and bush on the place. You buy yourself a home like this and kid yourself into thinking that no matter what happens you'll always have a place to live. But we've seen enough of our friends go broke to know that a roof over your head is worse than a stone around your neck if you have to move fast."

"But what can we do? What do you want to do?"

"It doesn't make any difference what I want to do. The engineer driving the Twentieth Century might just as well decide he'd like to take a short cut across the fields as for me to talk about the things I'd like to do."

Was this, Ellen wondered, the beginning of that vague horror called a nervous breakdown? Was Arthur likely to brood himself into desperation? What had happened, really? If his business had survived the years of acute depression it didn't seem likely that it should be in real danger now. She could remember when Arthur had smiled scornfully at the timid, henlike flutterings of so many men. But in the end the epidemic of fear and

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)t that he had lost any money or
.ore than moderately slackened. For
had economized erratically and, as
iselessly. They had discharged Martin, the
garden- been with them for a dozen years, ever since
they had first bought the place. They had cut down Willie's allowance at college, and they had done a lot of other things like going around turning off lights and buying fewer clothes and fewer table delicacies. Actually she had not suffered, but the whole experience had been distasteful. If Arthur's panic had seemed like a delayed echo of the general scream, like an echo it showed every sign of rounding out the final lingering note of fear.

Cocktails, as usual, somewhat revived Arthur's spirits. At dinner, which they ate alone, he discussed almost affably the approaching breakup of a neighborhood family they had known for some years. It was not until she mentioned quite casually the futility of doing anything drastic about the dissatisfactions of middle age that she noticed any return of his irritability. And then, as always, before she could do anything about it or even make up her mind as to the direction from which it was coming, the storm broke.

"You talk as though everybody who reached the age of forty-five or so suddenly got fed up," he said.

"Not everybody, of course. But you must admit that a great many of our friends have had trouble. There were the Pattens and the Oldens and the Camboys and—"

"Are you?"

"Am I what?"

"Fed up."

"Don't be silly."

"God knows you act as if you were."

"I! I like that when I seem to be the only one who makes the slightest effort to keep the peace."

"I didn't realize I was so difficult to live with."

"Oh, please let's not quarrel about nothing. Can't we even mention other people's troubles without increasing our own?"

They eyed each other through the distorting confusion of distrust, wonder, despair, and all the blind emotions that twenty-odd years of married life can conjure from the most commonplace phrases. They were very close to each other—their bickering was proof of that—and at the same time they were thousands of miles apart. It was as if a commuter approaching Manhattan by ferry should suddenly discover that he must go the other way around the world to get there. The great circle of their relationship embraced vast seas and continents of experience and emotion.

"Well, damn it, I'm fed up with your complete lack of sympathy," he shouted, desperately bolstering up his irritation.

"Sympathy with what? Every day I beg you to tell me what's wrong, why you seem so nervous and worried all the time. You won't let me be sympathetic. You won't let me get anywhere near you."

"There's no answer to such logic, I guess." He stood up and threw down his napkin as if it were a torpedo he was trying to explode. "No answer but feeling, and you don't seem to have much of that. You take me, as well as everything else in your life, for granted, and when I show any feelings or worries, you're upset and annoyed, the way you are when the icebox stops running or something goes wrong with the furnace. You seem to think the world is something installed for your personal use with a lifetime guarantee and when it doesn't work to suit you all you have to do is complain. Every time I mention economy you look like a Christian martyr. I don't blame you for worrying about my health when I stop to think about what it means to you."

Her face paled and she pressed her lips tightly together. When he saw that she was not going to reply, Arthur turned and walked out of the dining-room.

Ellen sat for a long time staring tensely, pallidly into her coffee cup. Occasionally she took a deep breath which seemed more a fierce hunger for air than a sigh. The bitter fierceness of Arthur's personal resentment had never before been so clear. He had no reason to accuse her of being fed up, but he wanted to believe that she was. He wanted some focus for his own groping dissatisfaction with the entire pattern of his life. He had no definite worry, but he had discovered that everything was wrong, from the gardener's understanding of English to her own casual wifeliness. If his business went to pieces now it would be wholly because he was losing his nerve. In his state anything might happen. He might become religious. If some—almost any—woman decided she wanted him he would be as helpless as an adolescent. He might—no, things hadn't got that bad yet—she hoped. Where was he now?

Sudden dread prodded her from her seat. She walked through the downstairs rooms. They were all silent, almost dark. She went out on the front porch and stood listening. A whippoorwill broke through the heavy silence. She turned and went back through the house to the living-room veranda. In the doorway she halted abruptly. She saw, barely perceptible in the dusk, a little white ball roll across the lawn. She almost laughed. She hoped that life would always treat her as playfully, that whenever she looked for tragedy she would find nothing more distressing than Arthur trying to improve his putting.

The next morning at breakfast she felt quite confident that she would be able somehow to divert Arthur's attention from his imaginary worries. And they were imaginary, otherwise he must certainly have let slip some definite hint. He wouldn't have been able to satisfy any real distress by merely accusing her of being fed up. As she sipped her coffee and turned away from the jittery headlines to the book page she felt pleasantly civilized and serene. She at least would keep her dignity and her sense of worldly balance while others kicked and screamed—against conditions, against the heat, against fate, against all the disjointed circumstances which attended the business of living. Some people imagined that everything could be made to fit neatly together, like a jigsaw puzzle. The trouble was that all the pieces came from different puzzles; they might all fit something, but not together. She felt quite pleased with her impromptu metaphor. She found her attitude of aristocratic aloofness exciting. She was almost startled when she realized that Winnie had come in and was waiting respectfully for her attention.

"There's a man out back, ma'am, says his name is Martin Honner. He says you'd know who he was and could he speak to you."

"Martin! Why, of course. Tell him to wait in the greenhouse. I'll be right out."

Things certainly were looking brighter this morning. She laid aside her napkin and stood up. Certainly Arthur would give up his silly idea about an occasional gardener if it were possible to get Martin back. Firing him had been one of the most disheartening of their measures of economy. Not since they had found their cat Chippie run over and not quite dead out in the main road had the family been so upset about anything. The early morning creaking of the wheelbarrow in Martin's hands had always been pleasant assurance that all was right with the world and the hardy perennials, not a warning that something was about to be done wrong. But how had Martin happened to turn up? He had left the village, and, the last she heard, was on a farm somewhere.

Ellen started to hurry across the lawn; then, remembering her dignity and the fact that it was nearly four years since she had seen Martin, she slowed her gait and joked herself into a more casual attitude by remarking that she was not, after all, Lady Chatterley.

Martin pulled off his cap and nodded as she neared the doorway where he was standing. She could have wished that his smile seemed more direct, more reminiscent.

"Well, Martin, I'm glad to see you again. We've all wondered what had become of you."

"I've been back in town a week or so. I came to look around

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—to see if there was anything—any work, I mean. And last night I happened to hear you'd fired—that you didn't have—a gardener, so I thought I'd come around and see if—well, if you wanted one."

Martin didn't look well, she decided. Anyway, he didn't smile the way he used to. His gentian-blue eyes that briefly glanced at her from time to time seemed to be guarding his own thoughts rather than observing her. She had expected with real pleasure to slip back into an old and comfortable relationship; instead she felt almost ill at ease. The old relationship seemed in some strange way to make things more, rather than less, difficult.

"Have you been out of work long?" she asked.

"I haven't had any steady job since I left here."

"Times certainly have been hard—with everybody. How are Mildred and the children?"

"Mildred's not very well. She keeps being sick off and on. Henry—that's the oldest boy—went out West some place. I haven't heard from him in quite some time now. Emma got a job this summer waiting on table at a boarding house upstate where we've been living. That's helped us some. The others are all right, I guess, except the baby that was born a year ago. She don't seem to grow and get strong the way the others did."

The idea of people like that having a baby in these times! Ellen felt deeply, exaggeratedly indignant. The feeling helped greatly to distract her sympathies from Martin's mournful story. It almost enabled her to ignore the disturbing restiveness of his eyes and the gaunt line of his bony jaw.

"After I tried for a while to find work around here we moved back upstate where I came from. I owned a little piece of property up there and I figured we could get along somehow. But things didn't work out so well. I finally lost the property and had to go on relief. I got a chance to get a ride down here last week, so I thought—" He glanced at Ellen and looked quickly away.

"Well, of course, I can't say anything definite without talking it over with Mr. Amber. He was saying last night that he thought he'd try to get along hiring someone by the day."

But she wasn't thinking about Arthur's ideas. She wasn't sure now that she wanted Martin back. He *had* changed. An inefficient gardener might be far less disturbing to her peace of mind than one who made the sympathetic demands of an established and almost personal relationship. The idea of their having a baby!

". . . and of course I'd want to be sure it was a steady job," he was saying. "I couldn't afford to move the family down for something that wasn't steady."

"Well, I'll talk with Mr. Amber when he gets home this evening. Of course, in these times he probably won't feel he can pay you quite as much—anyway, if you'll come back after he gets home you can talk with him."

"Well"—he stared bleakly off across the broad lawn— "I don't see how I could get along on much less. I still have a family to support—even in these times."

"Naturally, I realize that," she said, stiffening. "However, I should think it might be easier to support a family on less than on nothing." She smiled to cover her resentment. "After all, there are very few people who don't have to get along on less these days."

He said nothing. She had no reason to believe that he even contemplated making any reply, and yet she was suddenly afraid that he might argue the point, that she might be drawn into an undignified discussion. As abruptly as if she had heard someone calling her, she turned.

"Well, I'll tell Mr. Amber you were here, Martin. It was nice seeing you again, anyway."

She went quickly—and only she realized how breathlessly—back to the house. For a moment she stood in the hall; then she frowned impatiently and hurried to the kitchen. While she was going through her brief morning routine it occurred to her that there were several errands she had been meaning to do in the village. She hurried upstairs and changed, for purposeful activity, was in her car and out of the garage and drove to town.

She filled her day with movement. She had lunch at the club and went for a swim. After that she played bridge with three other restless women until it was time for her to pay the calls she intended getting off her conscience that day. Her calls were brief but they were filled to overflowing with rather pointless conversation. At length, as she turned the car toward home, she realized that Arthur would probably be there when she got back. She sighed her relief. Irritation, even bad news, would be better than sitting alone with nothing to do.

Each time the incident with Martin slipped through her determination to forget about it, she felt more bitter. She had been cheated and she could not endure being cheated. She had been so elated at his return, so sure that this bit of the pleasant past would make her old contentment real and imminent. And then . . . She forced herself to consider how one of her bridge hands might have been better played. But Martin was behind her, his dogged eyes looking over the cards at the broad lawn and the pleasant sunlight. The idea of people like that having another baby!

She saw Arthur in the rose garden as she came up the drive. He waved. Perhaps he was in a better mood tonight. She was sure he was when she saw him ambling toward the garage to meet her. Poor Arthur. Probably experiences like hers were a daily occurrence with him. No wonder he was irritable and worried. A gush of sympathy almost brought tears to her eyes. She must show him her understanding, make her allegiance more apparent.

"Where you been?" he asked, kissing her and smiling amiably.

She told him briefly, wondering what could have happened to change his mood so completely.

"Well, this has been one of those days you hope for but don't really expect," he said when she had finished.

"Tell me about it."

"In the first place, I want to say that I'm sorry about last night." He put his hand on her shoulder. "Things have been getting on my nerves lately and—well, I got so I had to shout at somebody—anybody."

"I think I understand."

He looked at her, surprised by her earnestness, but at the moment he was only eager to tell her his good news.

"Anyway, I finally wound up a deal today that will make more money for me—us—than I've made in ten years. It was partly this deal hanging fire that made me so jumpy lately. But it's all sewed up now—signed on the dotted line."

"Why, Arthur, that's wonderful. It seems like old times to hear you talk like that." She smiled, but as the phrase "old times" slipped out her smile withered.

"Wait! That's not all. I had lunch with our son. You were right last night. There's been a big bust-up. No wedding bells are going to ring out on $22.50 nuptials. He was in a bad way—tragic, somber, cynical. I almost felt ashamed at being so pleased. From a few things he said I have a feeling that her change of heart, mind, and body had something to do with my ultimatum that I'd never let the old homestead become a love nest."

"I'm so glad."

"You ought to be. You ought to be a lot gladder than you seem. Anything wrong? Don't tell me you're going to match my good news with bad and put us in the red again."

"No, I haven't any bad news—really." They had reached the veranda. Ellen sat down in one of the wicker chairs and Arthur, watching her, sat on the stone wall. She lit a cigarette. "I had a visitor this morning—Martin."

"Martin!"

"It seems he'd just got back to town after all these years and happened to hear that you'd fired the gardener. He wanted his old job back."

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"But why are you so upset about that? It would be a big relief to have Martin back. It would be like old times again."

Ellen smiled pallidly.

"That's what I thought—until I talked with him. He's changed. It's almost impossible for me to tell you how he's changed. I was so enthusiastic when Winnie told me he was here and wanted to see me. Then almost the minute I saw him I was disappointed. He seemed so—well, sort of resentful—almost insolent. He didn't really say anything that wasn't polite, but I felt all the time that his thoughts must be vicious. He's been very hard up. He was on relief, but that didn't stop Mildred from having another baby last year."

"That's too bad. I'd have liked to have Martin back."

"Well, I told him he could come and talk to you this evening if he wanted to. And I told him—I hadn't, of course, heard your good news then—that we couldn't afford to pay him his old wages in these times. He replied that he had a family to support—even in these times. Somehow he really did manage to upset me terribly. Martin always seemed so much a part of things that finding him changed was like discovering that all the trees around the house were diseased and would have to be cut down."

"Forget about it. There are plenty of gardeners. As a matter of fact, it's just as well not to let yourself get too attached to people who work for you. Think how hard it was firing him. We might have to do it again some time, and if we just have some Wop or somebody it makes it a lot simpler. I tell you what let's do; let's get in the car and go get us an expensive dinner somewhere. We ought to celebrate and forget Martin."

"But dinner must be almost ready."

"We can afford to leave lots of dinners almost ready tonight. Come on. You need to snap out of it."

"Well, I really would like to."

"That's the spirit." He grinned and went over and perched on the arm of her chair. "Cheer up," he said. "The old man's still able to keep you out of the poorhouse." He reached down and took her hand in his.

Ellen gazed off across the lawn. It was entirely Martin's own fault. If he had behaved halfway decently he would have had his old job back—and at his old salary, too. Arthur was always generous, even lavish, at times like this. By tomorrow she would have forgotten all about it—or next week, anyway. And Willie—what a relief that was. She felt Arthur's hand pressing hers affectionately. She ought to return the pressure. It was her duty to. She willed her fingers to clench his tightly. They did not move. It was all she could do to leave them entwined in the soft warmth of his. Each one seemed a living organism stifling for air and freedom. She jumped up.

"Well, I'll go and dress," she said brightly. "And I must let Clara know that we are going out for dinner."

Without looking at him she hurried into the house, yet she knew that he had frowned.

"Orthodoxy"

To My Taunting Friends

who are
my masters
in orthodoxy?

children in suburbs
twitching to any whirring sound;
women dropping in Pyrenean snow
(better wolves than Moors),
haunted windows of the City Hall of Prague
waiting to be splintered . . .

is it wrong to think "straight"
in the typhoon of germs
dropt in bottles of hate
over Yunnan plains? . . .

The "line," you say, the "line"!

bees flying to sweetness make their line
and their honey roomed on plan;
the diver for the pearls
tracks the line of air;
I have seen the loggers floating down
their herd of warring trees
(the river waiting, waiting for a slip),
have heard their cry, exact
and rich in turns as the swirling river.
Do you blame the frost-evading birds
their "ordered line"?

Stonecutters seek the seam:
are we less?
In Eurasia
they have traced our line in blood!

"Moscow orders . . ."

when I awaken from a dream that my child has been snatched
from me
and see my father in dream hanging from a swastika
and in dream see my mother's tomb desecrated—
dreams fed in day in day out the mulberry leaves of
our time—
and I rush screaming into my child's room
and frighten father at midnight by phoning
and relive mother's death in a million shames of agony

is it Moscow orders?

O whirling dervishes
you rebuke our line
and bid me walk your pontoon
of mist and treachery . . .

I glory in the "straight,"
the "line,"
Man's orders.

Taunt, all you would
who were once my friends.

Esthetes, you love flowers;
handfuls I will put on your bulleted graves,
who were once my friends:
To the memory of men who loved
the intellect's iridescent bends. . . .

THOMAS OREAN.

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With Apologies

J. M. Wilkoff

NOTE: The strange military tactics of those countries now engaged in war might very well influence future wars to such an extent that a typical war office of any nation engaged in the next war might indeed present such instances as we are about to show.

The scene shows a portion of any war office of any country during the next war. It is the apology department. There is a large desk holding center stage. Behind it are numberless shelves pigeonholed extensively and bearing various identifying placards carrying such legends as INFORMAL APOLOGIES, FORMAL APOLOGIES, SPECIFIC APOLOGIES, APOLOGY BLANKS, LETTERS OF APOLOGIES, APOLOGIES FOR FACTORIES, ETC. *To the left of this desk is a large easel bearing a chart such as is used in doctors' offices for demonstration purposes. To the right of the desk is a safe marked* DECLARATIONS OF WAR. *Behind the desk are several clerks engaged in writing, filing, working teletype machines, phones, etc. Sitting unobtrusively to the side is an aviator. His head hangs dejectedly and he has no interest in the scene. The clerks work with a military precision, and chant as they work.*

CLERKS: We're a military nation,
We're engaged in war and strife;
We've a bomb for every battleship,
A bullet for each life.
But there are some amenities
We try hard to observe—
For every "boom" our guns make
There's an apology in reserve. *(Gesture.)*

Alexander or Napoleon,
All warriors of yore,
Would have scoffed at such politeness,
At this letter-writing war.
But they were all barbarians
And knew not of decorum—
When they brought down an enemy
They had no pardons for 'im.

But we have found enlightenment
And though we do atrocities,
We've a note for every incident,
We've regrets and reciprocities.
We like to kill, but then again
We stick to the punctilio
With apologies for statesmen
From Rumania to Chile. Oh

Apologies are all the rage,
We'd never do without them.
Regrets and retributions—
Let us tell you all about them.

(Turning to the various pigeonholes and indicating them as they sing.)
Formal here, informal there
Are just what you would think them;
Civilians here, factories there,
(With glee)
Battleships when you sink them.
In this small drawer we like to keep
Apologies specific
For sinking ships in either
The Atlantic or Pacific.
Here are *letters* of apology,
Here notes, here forms, there blanks.
There apologies for governments,
Apologies for banks.

So while our medaled generals
All walk in paths of glory,
We work out the sweetest way
Of saying, "Gee, we're sorry."

(As the clerks finish their chant, a group of aviators march in with a presiding officer who marches immediately to the chart, in front of which the fliers arrange themselves. As this group enters, it, too, chants.)

AVIATORS: To us is entrusted
Each bomb that is busted
On the hapless heads of those who crawl below.
We've got to keep our vision
Working with precision.
We've come to have our eyes examined. . . .

OFFICER: *(Throwing back the initial page of the chart to reveal a large black sheet)* . . . Go!
AVIATORS: White!
OFFICER: Right. *(Turns page. A red sheet.)*
AVIATORS: Blue!
OFFICER: True! *(The next page shows an unmistakable oil derrick.)*
AVIATORS: Mine!
OFFICER: Fine. *(A map of the British Isles.)*
AVIATORS: China!
(The officer shakes his head in disagreement.)
Not China?
(Same business with head-shaking.)
Asia Minor.
(Again the officer agrees and reveals the next page—a map of the United States.)
Russia.
(Agrees. Next page, a Soviet hammer and sickle.)
Prussia.
(Agrees. The last page shows a cross-section of the digestive tract.)
Canal!
OFFICER: Yes, but where?
AVIATOR 1: What difference does that make?
OFFICER: Who said that?
AVIATOR 2: Our chief of staff.
OFFICER: Splendid.

(A few indistinct military orders, and the company marches out as it entered, singing.)

AVIATORS: We're beloved by all the land,
Our uniforms are grand,
We've *such* a *picnic* flying through the air.
On house, on boat, on steeple,
On soldiers, and on people
We drop things . . . *(Over their shoulders as they exit)*
. . . and they fall we know not where.

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(As they leave the clerks take up the refrain.)

CLERKS: But for every child or sailor,
Battleship or whaler,
Tank or truck or train or British lorry
That these boys do some dirt to
We're very much alert to
Have a mannered note to say we're sorry.

(A young aviator, not one of the recent group, enters and approaches the desk. He is hesitant and timid.)

YOUNG AVIATOR: Is this the apology bureau?
CLERK 1: It is.
YOUNG AVIATOR: My name is . . .
CLERK 1: Not interested in names. What's your number?
YOUNG AVIATOR: Y. A. 789.
CLERK 1: *(Going through some files.)* Oh yes, you're here to be punished for . . .
YOUNG AVIATOR: Informal Apology No. 652.
CLERK 1: Exactly . . . and what do you have to say?
YOUNG AVIATOR: I didn't know my bomb chamber was loaded.
CLERK 1: *(Impatiently.)* Yes, yes, of course. We know that. I mean, what do you have to say about your punishment?
YOUNG AVIATOR: If it wouldn't be asking too much . . . I was thinking that suicide . . .
CLERK 1: *(Incredulous.)* What?
YOUNG AVIATOR: I only thought . . .
CLERK 1: *(Leaning over the desk in a confidential manner.)* Do you know what the news dispatches, and the apology too, for that matter, said about your fate? *(The young aviator shakes his head.)* You were summarily shot at sunrise yesterday . . . without trial.
YOUNG AVIATOR: *(Plaintively.)* But can't I commit suicide?
CLERK 1: Don't be absurd . . . for one gunboat?
YOUNG AVIATOR: But . . .
CLERK 1: Now there's a fellow . . . *(Indicates the dejected aviator, who perks up at what the clerk has to say.)* . . . He will be permitted to commit suicide . . . but he has a right to . . .
YOUNG AVIATOR: Why?
CLERK 1: Because he, with one load of bombs, got the Bulgarian consulate, an attaché, two battleships, and three civilians . . .
YOUNG AVIATOR: But I got . . .
CLERK 1: *(As an afterthought.)* . . . All belonging to countries with which we are not at war. *(The young aviator looks with awe at his colleague, who now struts and basks in glory.)*
YOUNG AVIATOR: And he . . . ?
CLERK 1: Will be allowed to commit suicide. *(As though to a child.)* But after all, my dear boy, *his* action necessitated an informal, two formal, and three specific apologies, a letter from the dictator and a trans-Pacific telephone call before the incident was considered closed. *(Disparagingly.)* And you want to be permitted to commit suicide over a measly gunboat, one simple informal apology. *(As he rings a bell.)* And handled by an underling at that.

(This harangue has completely shattered the young aviator's spirit. He hangs his head and goes with the attendant who has responded to the clerk's bell. The clerk says to the attendant:)

Young Aviator 789 to be shot.

(As the young aviator leaves, he steals a surreptitious glance at the other aviator as he passes him. The other is quite pleased with himself and big with pride. He follows the other two out like a peacock. Just as they are about to leave, the clerk calls out to the attendant:)

That's to be "summarily" shot . . . we must follow the etiquette.

(He turns to his colleagues for approval and commendation as the others go out. At this point a general, accompanied by several aides, rushes into the office. Angry and distraught, he shouts:)

GENERAL: Who, who, I repeat, who sent Apology 475?
CLERK: I did, sir.
GENERAL: You, you blockhead. Do you know what you've done?
CLERK: I apologized for something or another.
GENERAL: Yes, but to a country we didn't offend, idiot!
AIDE: We had nothing to apologize for . . .
GENERAL: *(To his aide.)* Quiet! If they had seen you, we'd have plenty to apologize for. *(To clerk.)* But you, you blundering fool, you've disgraced us. The idea . . . what are we to do . . . sending an apology when we haven't brought about the merest hint of an incident.
AIDE: Not even a window broken in the consulate.
CLERK: I'm sorry, sir. There are so many apologies. Mistakes can happen.
GENERAL: In war there are no such things as mistakes.
CLERK: To whom did we apologize?
GENERAL: How do I know?
CLERK: What did we apologize for?
(The General is at a loss. His aide comes to his assistance.)
AIDE: Killing an ambassador. *(At this the clerk goes through his files hurriedly.)* Sir, I have a suggestion.
GENERAL: Well?
AIDE: Why not go out and kill the ambassador? Then the apology will be valid.
GENERAL: *(Storming.)* What do you take me for—an idiot, a moron, a savage? *(Letting his voice drop.)* That occurred to me immediately. *(They all wait for an explanation.)* But when the ambassador heard of the apology he fled to the hills.
CLERK: *(Still searching.)* Was it a specific apology, sir?
GENERAL: Why?
CLERK: There are several ships in the harbor. We could bomb them. One of them *must* belong to the country to whom we sent the apology.
GENERAL: It won't do, the apology was specific. *(This from coaching from the aide.)*
AIDE: Specifically for killing an ambassador.
(There is a moment of worry for all concerned.)
I've got it . . . just the thing . . . oh, why didn't I think of it before?
GENERAL: Because you can't think. Well, what is it?
AIDE: Declare war on the country. Then there'll be no need for apologies.
(The apology clerks give him dirty looks for this, but the general looks wistfully at the large safe marked DECLARATIONS OF WAR.)
GENERAL: That *would* be a good idea . . . but there's no use . . . the combination to that safe has been lost ever since the last election.
CLERK: There wouldn't be any time for that, anyway. I'm sure we can think of something.
CLERK 2: *(Approaching the others.)* Pardon me, gentlemen. I have been working on something to take care of just such an emergency.
CLERK: *(To the others.)* He's our expert . . . best man in the department.
GENERAL: Indeed?
CLERK: Oh yes. He perfected the apology for an insult to a flag. You know . . . the one that begins, "Oops, so sorry."
GENERAL: *(Adequately impressed.)* Well, come, my good man, what is it . . . what solution have you?
CLERK 2: *(Consulting a paper in his hand.)* Well, it's . . .
GENERAL: Come, come, out with it . . . *(Lifts him up to the top of the desk.)*
CLERK 2: *(The position brings out the dramatic in him and he poses on the desk, flourishing a paper.)* The solution, an apology apologizing for an apology.

FINIS

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Four Poems

Sidney Alexander

Buddha

Fat Buddha sat upon a shelf
and held his belly in his hands,
his squatting, involuted self
lay heavily upon the lands.

The lamas in procession wound
up rocky Tibet's temple hill,
and spun the prayer wheels round and round
and thus appeased fat Buddha's will.

Ascetic monks, their yellow skins
drawn taut about a withered jaw,
beat drums, ate straw, and slept on pins
and thus fulfilled fat Buddha's law.

They clanged the bronzen temple gongs,
they stood upon their shaven heads,
they warmed the chilly air with songs
of supplication to the dead.

Fat Buddha clapped his fourteen arms
(the symbol of fertility)
Ten thousand monks spun round their charms,
and starved of excess piety.

Philosophers of Buddha's haunch
sniffed incense rising from the bowl,
and traced in wrinkles of his paunch
the implications of the soul . . .

And then one day the angry poor
dismayed the metaphysic wits . . .
Fat Buddha hit the temple floor
and smashed his fourteen arms to bits!

Fat Buddha, Oh fat Buddha!
you are dead dead dead . . .
and Tse-Tsin with a polished hoe
is reaping corn instead. . . .

A Letter to My Wife

Loving in these times
is planting seeds upon the hillsides of volcanoes.

Have you not wakened at names
in sleep? mutilated shapes of heroes?

Does he lie coiled in caves
of your brain? war the sharer of your bed?

the prophecy of knives
you saw? the horrible dream of the greenish dead?

Suddenly at the kiss: laughter
over the coffee: pervading our privatest marrow:

up like a spar on water
remote from all but us: invading with sorrow—

the world plunges in fog:
no panic, darling, precariously cling.

Our rose is blooming at
the brink of imminent lava: yet petals sing.

The Egoist

Harmonia of stars and beat of bells
cannot impinge upon him—for he dwells
within the bubble of his ego: green
and bulbous microcosmos in a storm.

He sees the sprawling world through concave walls
distorted to an image of himself . . .
What? begging hands are pressing at the pane?
He readjusts his bloated purple tie.

What if they press? . . . He is secure, ensconced
against that meager froth and foam. Thus in
a temple he himself has blown, he sips
salvation with his cigarette and tea—

drops a fitful eucharist of ash,
mourns the pennies he has paid for sin,
blows some smoke against the rounded glass
to stain away the poor who peer within—

Wall Street—Dusk

The flawless sweeps of such white buildings
to the sun, congeal a logic
one with pueblos and with pyramids.

Labor long ago piled brick on brick—
like us, populated empty skies—
like us, swarmed up to the sun—and fell.

I think of Anselm with his dusty hair,
and see emerge above brown Trinity
the timeless syllogisms of the stars.

Yet, all your Ultimates are impotent to stay
the logic that shall burst these moneyed stones
and clamor for a sun that never was.

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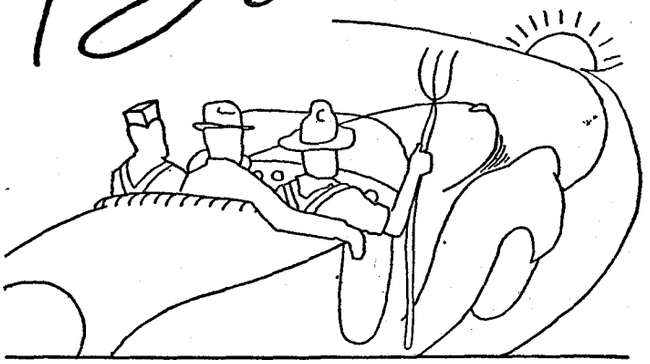

"America is waking up, and the middle class, all things considered, is playing its part in that awakening. You can help or you can hinder the transformation that is now going on. If you understand the amount of unnecessary misery there is, I think you will be generous enough to help. If you examine candidly your own position, I think you will be wise enough to help."

I LIKE AMERICA, *by* **GRANVILLE HICKS,** *page 122*

BECAUSE WE LIKE AMERICA, New Masses will continue to help the members of the awakening middle class "examine candidly" their own position.

(As we did recently in *Liberal Arts and the Marginal Life*, by Motier Harris Fisher; *Who Is the Little Business Man?* by A. B. Magil.)

● We will continue to keep you informed of "the transformation that is now going on."

(*Who Won in Pennsylvania?* by Bruce Minton; *Roosevelt and the South*, by Lee Coller; behind-the-scenes reports from Washington by Marguerite Young.

● We will continue to point out the role America must play in world affairs if we are to save our own dream for ourselves.

(Earl Browder's series on *Concerted Action vs. Isolation;* his debate with Frederick J. Libby; *America Can Halt Japan*, by Paul G. McManus.)

● We will continue to point out how unnecessary is the misery you see around you and what can be done to end it.

(*Homes for the One-Third*, by Sidney Hill; *We Speak for the Unemployed*, by David Lasser; *Labor Unity and the Elections*, by John T. Bernard.)

BECAUSE we agree so thoroughly with the things Granville Hicks says in his book I LIKE AMERICA, we are glad to be able to offer it to new or renewing subscribers with a six months subscription to New Masses.

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